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Language Styling and Switching in Speech and Online Contexts: Identity and Language Ideologies in Taiwan

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Language Styling and Switching in Speech and Online Contexts: Identity and Language Ideologies in Taiwan

by

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Dedication

To my parents,

with love and gratitude

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Language Styling and Switching in Speech and Online Contexts: Identity and Language Ideologies in Taiwan

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This dissertation presents a study of the mutually constitutive relationships between linguistic and discursive practices, identity construction, and language ideologies in the context of contemporary Taiwan. It investigates the ways in which dialect styling and language switching occur in both face-to-face and online environments among college students from different regions of Taiwan, as well as the ways in which students' linguistic practices are linked with their identities,

language attitudes, and the broader sociopolitical context of contemporary Taiwan. Some relevant forms of dialect styling, or the construction of a social image or persona through the use of dialect features (Coupland, 2001), include monothongization of vowels, the variable realizations of retroflex consonants, [tʂ], [tʂ^{h}], [ʂ], and [ʐ], and the replacement of syllable initial labiodental consonant [f] with [hw]. Both language switching between Mandarin and Taiwanese and dialect styling are common in Taiwanese society. These practices are sometimes considered part of a speaker's natural repertoire and sometimes a conscious (or semi-conscious) performance of various personas. Analyzing phonological variation, code-switching, prominent sociolinguistic stereotypes, and language attitudes revealed by the participants in a variety of contexts, this study explores how Taiwanese college students make use of linguistic and cultural resources available to construct multiple identities with respect to social categories such as region, gender, BBS/Internet users, college students, members of particular student groups, and contemporary Taiwanese. This dissertation also examines how various indexical meanings associated with common linguistic varieties in Taiwan are formed, how language ideologies participate in the construction of identity and the formation of social groups, and how language ideologies (as well as ideologies of region, gender, and class) are constantly reinforced and reconfigured through linguistic and social practices in daily interactional and performative contexts.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Kathryn Woolard, in a review article on language ideologies (1998), cited Raymond Williams' (1977) observation regarding language and society: "a definition of language is always, implicitly or explicitly, a definition of human beings in the world" (p. 3). Viewing each linguistic production as invariably embedded in and constituting larger human activities, this study examines some of the ways in which language use organizes individuals and social groups and the relationships between the two in the context of contemporary Taiwan. It explores the intricately interwoven relations between linguistic and discursive practices, speaker's multiple identities, and cultural ideologies concerning language, gender, region, and prominent social categories in Taiwanese society. Specifically, this study investigate the ways in which dialect styling and language switching occur in both face-to-face and online environments among college students from different regions of Taiwan, as well as the ways in which students' linguistic practices are linked with their identities, language attitudes, and the broader sociopolitical context of contemporary Taiwan.

Some relevant forms of dialect styling, or the construction of a social image or persona through the use of dialect features (Coupland, 2001), include monothongization of vowels, the variable realizations of retroflex consonants, [tʂ], [tʂ^{h}], [ʂ], and [ʐ], and the replacement of syllable initial labiodental consonant [f]

with [hw]. Both language switching between Mandarin and Taiwanese and dialect styling are common in Taiwanese society. These practices are sometimes considered part of a speaker's natural repertoire and sometimes a conscious (or semi-conscious) performance of various personas. Starting from an investigation of the linguistic features and the communicative functions of language styling and switching, this research project seeks to relate language use at the micro-level to speakers' identities and ideologies in contemporary Taiwan. The Taiwanese context is an especially interesting site to study issues of identity and language ideology because of its unsettled national status in international politics and its politically hostile, yet economically mutually beneficial, relationship with China. Since the birth of Taiwan, Taiwanese people have been striving to define their national and ethnic identities, and language has played a very prominent role in recent sociopolitical and ideological developments in Taiwan.

This project is significant for several different fields and groups. First, it contributes to the fields of sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology because it touches upon issues of language contact, the roles language play in the construction of identities, and language ideologies: all of these topics are important themes of research within sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology, which concern the contextualized analysis of issues of structure and agency in language choice. In addition, the project incorporates an analysis of language interaction on the Internet, a type of communication that has shaped human experiences tremendously but has

not yet been much used as a source of data in the study of language, identities, and ideologies in general. Second, the project is of significance to social scientists and area specialists who focus on Taiwanese studies or transnational Chinese studies because it provides a detailed empirical investigation of switching between accents or languages accorded different kinds of prestige in Taiwan while connecting the micro analysis of language use to prominent cultural stereotypes, language ideologies, and the broader sociopolitical context in contemporary Taiwan.

The project involves 14 months of fieldwork online and in two colleges in Taipei and Tainan, two cities whose population displays different demographic features. The methods of data collection include participant observation both online and in face-to-face interactions, interviews, and recordings of stage performances in university settings. Data are analyzed from three perspectives: first, at the linguistic level, with a focus on lexical choices, phonological variations associated with dialect styling, and the places code-switching occurs in the data; second, the communicative functions of language styling and switching; and third, the participants' language attitudes and ideologies as revealed in the discourse. More importantly, the analysis investigates how the three levels of analysis interact as speakers construct multiple identities.

1.1 Research Questions and Linguistic Practices to be Analyzed

1.1.1 Research Questions

The research questions I attempt to answer are as follows:

(1) How do Taiwanese college students of different backgrounds with respect to region of college attended, region of origin, and urbanness of origin, use the available linguistic resources in speaking and online to create complex identities? To what extent are dialect styling and language switching conventionalized (Ferguson, 1994) among the students?

(2) How do students understand the social meanings of Mandarin, Taiwanese, dialect styling, and code-switching in speaking and online contexts?

(3) How can we best contextualize the responses to questions 1 and 2 in light of the changing reality of Taiwanese society?

1.1.2 Linguistic Practices Analyzed

The focal linguistic practices in the project include any form of dialect styling or language switching, whether they are considered by the local communities to be "authentic" way of speaking or to involve a significant amount of performance. I am especially interested in any kind of joking, mocking, or language play. I also examine whether change in accents or language is accompanied by change in discourse functions or topics, and how these linguistic practices are

related to identity construction and language ideologies. Examples of the focal linguistic practices to be studied are identified below.

DIALECT STYLING

In daily interaction, Mandarin speakers in Taiwan display a range of variation with regard to the degree of influence from Taiwanese phonology in their speech. The various accents form a continuum, in which one end is standard Taiwan Mandarin while the other end is the most stigmatized variety of *Taiwan Guoyu*, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. [1] The most common features (stereotypically) associated with Taiwanese-accented Mandarin are as follows:

(1) De-retroflexion: replacement of retroflex consonants in syllable-initial position with sibilant consonants or liquids. For example, [ʂ] in standard Mandarin is often replaced by [s], [tʂ^{h}] by [ts^{h}], [ʐ] by [l], and [tʂ] by [ts].

(2) Replacement of syllable-initial [f] with [hw]: for example, the syllable-initial [f] in 'fan' *meal* can be replaced by [hw]. Therefore, instead of

[1] I use the coined term "Taiwanese-accented Mandarin" to refer to *Taiwan Guoyu*, a sociolinguistic stereotype prevalent in Taiwanese society. An alternative term is *Taiwanese Mandarin*, as used by researchers such as Fon and Chiang (1999). However, to emphasize *Taiwan Guoyu* as a local sociolinguistic stereotype rather than a representative of how Mandarin is spoken in contemporary Taiwan, I choose to use the somewhat lengthy coinage and regard Taiwanese-accented Mandarin as a sociolinguistic construct rather than a homogenous, autonomous linguistic system.

saying ‘lai chi fan’ [laj tʂʰɨ fan] *let’s eat*, a speaker with a strong Taiwanese accent might say [laj tsʰɨ hwan].[2]

(3) The variable use of rounded and unrounded vowels: for example, instead of saying ‘ge’ [gɤ] *brother,* a speaker with a Taiwanese accent might say [gɔ].

(4) The monothongization of vowels: for example ‘guo’ [guo] *pass* might be pronounced as [go].

Members of younger generation sometimes make use of varying degrees of realizations of these features to accommodate to their audience, to express their identities, or to create a humorous effect.

Interestingly, the use of the linguistic features identified above in (1) through (4) has become a common practice on the Internet as well despite the differences in medium. Internet users rely on the morphosyllabic nature of the Chinese writing system and search for characters that represent sounds similar to the Taiwanese accent they intend to imitate. Thus, when one is reading such a sentence, the effect is what sounds like the mimicry of an intelligible Mandarin sentence heavily influenced by Taiwanese phonology, while the strings of characters present an anomaly in meaning. The discrepancy between the recovered meaning of the sentence, the sound effect of the sentence, and the meaning inherent in each

[2] The IPA transcriptions of Mandarin vowels and consonants mainly follow Cheng (1973), Lai

character is exactly the source of the parodic effect of the language play. An example is given in (1) below.

(1)	(A)	Intended meaning		(B)Dialect Styling		
Characters	我	是	誰？	偶	素	髓？
Romanization	wo	shi	shei	ou	su	sui
Gloss	I	am	who	even number	plain	marrow
Meaning	Who am I?			Who am I? (with a Taiwanese accent)		

Practices like this show that a Taiwanese accent has been strategically used to create a form of language play. This practice serves as a means to construct a lively and jocular Internet persona, yet its meaning can only be understood through the relationships between ethnic groups and ideological development in Taiwanese society. With the use of dialect styling on the Internet, the author aligns him-/herself with the indexical values associated with the accent and its local prestige. However, the transformation from a spoken accent to written word play, which implies the ability to manipulate language, appears to filter out the negative connotation of uneducatedness often linked with the accent. On a more global level, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is a unique linguistic variety spoken only in Taiwan, and language play based on the accent is a linguistic product that belongs solely to a society in which members are familiar with both the Chinese writing system and the local, usually stigmatized accent. This particular linguistic style, originated in Taiwan, thus has its importance in the ideologizing of social differentiations: it

(2005, 2005), and Norman (1988).

distinguishes Taiwanese society from the rest of the Chinese-speaking/writing world.

LANGUAGE SWITCHING

Switching between Mandarin and Taiwanese is also a common practice among bilingual speakers in Taiwan. An example is shown in (2). Mandarin is indicated by bold face while Taiwanese is represented by italics and underlining.

(2) **Nimen dabufen** *long kong sa^{n}mi?*
You(pl) majority all speak what
'What do you usually talk about?' (Su, 2000)

Code-switching between Mandarin and Taiwanese is often used to negotiate interpersonal relationships (Myers-Scotton, 1993) or to organize the internal structure of the conversation (Gumperz, 1982). I am interested in investigating where code-switching occurs, how its social meaning is understood by Taiwanese college students, how it plays a role in identity construction, and how code-switching provides us an opportunity to examine the unequal distribution of symbolic and material resources among different groups.

Code-switching between Mandarin and Taiwanese occurs on the Internet as well. Although there is no standardized writing system for Taiwanese, Internet users often choose characters representing sounds similar to the intended Taiwanese words to produce the effect of language switching. An example of switching

between Mandarin and Taiwanese is given in (3). Mandarin is represented in a regular font while Taiwanese is in italics and underlined.

(3) **簡直 是** *衰* **到 最高點**, *誰人 甲 我 比*
jianzhi shi *sui* dao zuigaodian, *sia^{n}lang ka goa pi*
simply BE unluckyreach climax who with me compare
'I simply have the worst luck in the world. No one can compete with me on that.'
(Gu, 2001)

As above, for the speaker familiar with only standard Mandarin, this sentence would be gobbledygook. Since Taiwanese does not have a standard writing system and many Taiwanese words do not have equivalent written forms in the Chinese writing system, code-switching from Mandarin to Taiwanese is considered a marked choice and involves a certain degree of creativity on the writer's part. Choosing characters to represent spoken Taiwanese, therefore, involves complex linguistic, sociolinguistic, and psycholinguistic processes, since language users' creativity is constantly conditioned by the linguistic constraints of the existing Chinese writing system. It is worth noting that although Mandarin and Taiwanese have influenced each other, the social meanings of Mandarin-influenced Taiwanese is very different from those of Taiwanese-influenced Mandarin as described above and is only briefly explored in this study.

In the remaining part of this chapter, I review literature related to this study. In Chapter 2, I provide a brief sketch of the sociolinguistic background of Taiwan. Chapter 3 discusses methods of data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 focuses on the relationship between language and region and investigates (1) the discursive and

linguistic means through which the North and the South are constructed as cultural places distinctive from each other; (2) how individual and group identities are simultaneously constituted through the processes of rendering particular locations socially meaningful; and (3) the interaction between discourse(s) of regional differences and language ideologies. Chapter 5 explores issues related to language and gender. It investigates *qizhi* and *taike*, two prominent cultural concepts in Taiwan, and focuses on the interaction between language ideologies and gender expectations and stereotypes. Chapter 6 examines language use on the Taiwan-based Internet. It demonstrates how Taiwanese college students make use of the linguistic resources at their disposal to create a language style in response to change in mode of communication. It also shows how different types of communication interact with each other as language users construct identities and language attitudes. Chapter 7 concludes the study.

1.2 Literature Review

This section reviews several bodies of literature within the fields of sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. The first half briefly reviews research concerning major issues discussed in this study, including language ideologies, identity, language styling and stylization, code-switching, sociolinguistics of Taiwan, and playfulness; it serves to situate this dissertation in its disciplinary

context. The second half focuses on the theoretical frameworks extensively drawn upon in this study and reviews them with greater details.

1.2.1 Disciplinary Context

LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES

In the past two decades, there has been a widespread recognition of language ideologies as a crucial topic of debate in the study of language and society. Language ideologies, as defined by Silverstein, are "sets of belief about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use" (1979, p. 183). Although researchers have approached the study of language ideologies in various ways, one common effort is to seek to describe the ways in which social structure is mediated through language and how the sets of belief about language are naturalized and rationalized (Blommaert, 1999; Irvine, 2001; Kroskrity, 2004; Kroskrity, 2000; Schieffelin, Woolard, & Kroskrity, 1998; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). This study investigates how Taiwanese college students' beliefs about language are reproduced and shaped by language choice and dialect styling in various contexts and participates in the ongoing discussion of the relationship between linguistic practices and social structure.

IDENTITIES, LANGUAGE STYLING, AND STYLIZATION

In the traditional variationist paradigm of sociolinguistics, styles are defined as attention paid to speech (Labov, 1972). An increase in the formality of the situation results in increased self-monitoring by the speakers. Style variation is taken as a direct behavioral manifestation of the linguistic system in a community. However, a new tendency has emerged over time, which regards styles less as part of a fixed behavioral pattern and more as strategic response to audience characteristics on the speaker's part. Giles and Powesland's accommodation theory (1975) and Bell's audience design (Bell, 1984) are two early examples of this point of view. Adopting the view that style can be considered strategic but departing in significant ways is more recent research on language styling and crossing (e.g., Cameron, 2000; Coupland, 2001; Eckert, 2000; Eckert & Rickford, 2001; Hill, 1999; e.g., Rampton, 1995; Schilling-Estes, 1998; Zhang, forthcoming), which focuses on speakers' creative deployment of linguistic resources and regards style as a form of discursive social action. Under this approach, speakers are social agents whose language choice is motivated, although they are not necessarily conscious of their choices. Rampton (1995) and Coupland (2001) discuss a specific set of discursive constructions within language styling in general, which are named 'crossing' and 'stylization', respectively. Crossing involves the appropriation or challenge of influential images that the speakers do not straightforwardly belong to. Stylization, similar to the concept of crossing yet placing less emphasis on the in-

group/out-group distinction, focuses on the performative and metaphorical aspects of language choice.

The investigation of crossing and stylization poses an especially interesting question in the Taiwanese context. In such a society, where ethnic boundaries are not always based on physical traits, how do speakers use language to negotiate membership in a group? For example, when Taiwanese college students are engaged in the production of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, how does the local community interpret its meaning? The linkage between membership in ethnic groups and ownership of languages in Taiwan seems far less direct and salient than in the societies studied in the literature (e.g., Rampton 1995; Bucholtz 1999; Hill 1999). The research project, therefore, may contribute to a more general theorizing of language styling and its relationships with group boundaries.

Research on language styling also raises the issues of language and agency in identity construction, which is a central concern of a number of research, such as Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985), Bourdieu (1991), Bucholtz et al. (1999), Bucholtz and Hall (2004b), Walters (1996b), and the research reviewed in Bucholtz and Hall (2004a). Although researchers may take different stances with regard to the definition of agency and how much agency individuals have, it is generally believed that identities are dynamic processes constructed and reconstructed through everyday experiences and social interactions. However, although speakers may be regarded as social agents whose creativity helps construct individual styles and

identities, their creative performances are constantly constrained and shaped by social structures. This study focuses on how Taiwanese college students construct multiple identities under various social, linguistic, and technological constraints. From the social point of view, in addition to social constraints at the more local level, Taiwan is also a significant economic power in the world with an unresolved political status. From the linguistic point of view, any form of language use and language play, such as practices of dialect styling and switching, is conditioned by linguistic systems. From the technological point of view, the prevalence of the online linguistic practices studied in this dissertation is closely related to the emergence of the Internet and the widespread use of computer. This research project relates college students' linguistic practices to the various forces at work in Taiwanese society and wishes to contribute to the ongoing discussion of structure and agency.

CODE-SWITCHING

Another relevant body of literature is the work on code-switching. Although code-switching involves switching between languages, the social processes involved in code-switching are similar to those in style shifting (Milroy, 1987; Romaine, 1995). Since Blom and Gumperz's pioneering study on code-switching (1972), there has been a rich literature on the strategic uses of code-switching (e.g., Gumperz, 1982; Myers-Scotton, 1993). A number of researchers concerned with code-

switching on a macro-level also demonstrate that code-switching should be understood not only as individual communicative repertoires but also as community speech economies (e.g. Gal, 1979; Heller, 1992, 1995). This project connects interactional aspects of code-switching with macro social processes and incorporates code-switching online in the analysis. Code-switching in a written medium involves a number of factors different from those involved in speaking. Therefore, the investigation of both forms might contribute to the existing literature in code-switching.

SOCIOLINGUISTIC RESEARCH ON TAIWAN

Since the late 1980's an interest in the study of the sociolinguistic situation in Taiwan has emerged. Early studies such as Van den Berg (1986) and Young (1989) seek to outline language choice behaviors in face-to-face interactions and their relationship with factors such as setting, generation, and ethnicity. Shih (1997) explores code-switching in Taiwan and investigate its communicative functions. Feifel (1994) and Young et al. (1992) take a different approach and focus on language attitudes in Taiwan. Huang's influential book-length study (1993) presents a macro-level study and a thorough survey of many important issues in Taiwan up to the 1990's, including language use, maintenance, shift, and death, their relationship with the political and economic power of different ethnic groups, the history of language planning and policies in Taiwan, and the standardization of

Taiwanese. Along the line of Huang's study (1993), several recent studies (e.g. Huang, 2000; Tse, 2000) have shown a greater interest in discussing the relationship between language and identity from the perspective of macro social processes. Sandel (2003) examines the relationship between school-based language policies and family-based linguistic practices. Similar to Sandel's attempt in demonstrating the complex interplay between public and private histories of development of language ideologies, this study analyzes linguistic data at the micro level, while simultaneously investigating the interaction between micro analysis and the broader sociopolitical context.

LANGUAGE PLAY AND PLAYFULNESS

The term "playful" connotes "a mood of frolicsomeness, lightheartedness, and wit" (Sutton-Smith, 1997, p.147). Of three components of playfulness—spontaneity, manifest joy, and a sense of humor (Lieberman, 1977, p.6), it is humor that is most in evidence in this study, although fun or joy are also involved. Generally, the humor derives from the incongruous discrepancy between literal and intended meanings (Palmer, 1994). Regarding language play, Crystal (1998) notes:

> We play with language when we manipulate it as a source of enjoyment, either for ourselves or for the benefit of others.....We take some linguistic feature-such as a word, a phrase, a sentence,...a group of sounds, a series of letters-and make it do things it does not normally do....we do it...for fun. (p. 1)

Sherzer (2002) relates language play with the larger socio-cultural contexts and defines speech play as:

> the manipulation of elements and components of language in relation to one another, in relation to the social and cultural contexts of language use, and against the backdrop of other verbal possibilities in which it is not foregrounded. (p. 1)

A number of researchers have noted a tendency toward playfulness in online communication. Werry (1996) suggests that computer-mediated communication places physical constraints on the display of contextualization cues (Gumperz, 1982), such as prosody, gesture, and addressivity. As the link between speakers and listeners is weakened, speakers must add variety in written discourse to compete for attention. Herring (1999) proposes that the loose coherence and disrupted adjacency in both synchronous and asynchronous forms of computer-mediated communication invite greater instances of humorous play. Danet (2001) identifies four major factors that fostered playfulness in the Internet medium in the mid- to late-1990s:

> Objective features of the medium itself, and particularly its interactive, dynamic, immersive nature; hacker culture with its valorization of wit and play with symbols and typography, and a predilection for various forms of subversiveness; the "Wild West" quality of cyberspace as a new and relatively unsettled social and cultural frontier governed by few norms; and the masking of identity—the lack of cues to physical appearance, ethnic identity, gender, etc. (p. 362-363)

This study examines humor involved in certain performative contexts, four online forms of play with writing systems, and factors that foster playfulness on the Taiwanese Electronic Bulletin Board Services (BBS's).

1.2.2 Theoretical Frameworks Extensively Drawn Upon

INDEXICALITY

One of the leading researchers in the field of language socialization, Elinor Ochs, in her work "Indexing gender" (1992), investigates how "gender ideologies are socialized, sustained, and transformed through talk, particularly through verbal practices that recur innumerable times in the lives of members of social groups" (p. 336). The theory of indexicality developed in Ochs (1992) is helpful in understanding how certain languages, dialects, or forms of language use come to convey various social meanings. Ochs identifies two kinds of indexicality: direct and indirect. An example provided by her illustrates their differences and how ideological connections are made through them. In Japanese, the use of the sentence-final particle *wa* is often associated with female-like speech, while the use of the sentence-final particle *ze* is linked with male-like speech. This connection is made through two layers of indexicality, that is, *wa* directly indexes delicateness, and since delicateness is a preferred social image for women, the particle comes to indirectly index female voice. Similarly, *ze* is directly linked to coarseness and indirectly indexes male voice. Through indexicality, ideological connections

between linguistic forms and gender are made. Through similar processes, the various languages and dialects spoken in Taiwan come to convey certain social meanings, as is discussed in following chapters.

ICONIZATION, FRACTAL RECURSIVITY, AND ERASURE

Irvine and Gal (2000) and Irvine (2001) propose three semiotic processes through which linguistic forms are linked with social phenomena and language ideologies become instantiated. *Iconization* involves

> a transformation of the sign relationship between linguistic features (or varieties) and the social images with which they are linked. Linguistic features that index social groups or activities appear to be iconic representations of them, as if a linguistic feature somehow depicted or displayed a social group's inherent nature or essence. (Irvine & Gal, 2000, p. 37)

The oppositions created through such ideological linkage between social groups and linguistic forms can be replicated through another semiotic process identified as *fractal recursivity*, which involves the projection of an opposition salient at one level onto some other levels of social structure. *Erasure*, the third semiotic process, works to (over)simplify the sociolinguistic field. It renders certain sociolinguistic phenomena invisible, ignoring distinctiveness not compatible with the ideological scheme of a given society. Both *iconization*, one of the processes identified by Irvine and Gal (2000), and the theoretical construct of *indexicality*

proposed by Ochs (1992), participate in identity formation and the rationalization and naturalization of the links between linguistic and social forms, yet the direction of the processes are converse. Bucholtz and Hall (2004a) summarizes the relationship between the two:

> Indexicality produces ideology through practice, while iconization represents practice through ideology. In the first instance, ideologies of cultural intelligible identities emerge from social actors' habitual practice; in the second instance, actual practice may be far removed from the imagined practices that ideology constructs on the basis of perceived and literalized metaphorical resemblance between language and social organization. In both instances, however, ideology remains in the shadow (p. 380).

TACTICS OF INTERSUBJECTIVITY

Bucholtz and Hall (2004b) propose a theoretical framework for the sociolinguistics of identity. Building on previous works such as Giles et al. (1975), Irvine and Gal (2000), and Bell (2001), this model argues that identity is intersubjectively and relationally constructed in local contexts of language use. Tactics of intersubjectivity are the relations created through identity work and include three pairs of processes: *adequation and distinction*, *authentication and denaturalization*, and *authorization and illegitimation*. The first pair, adequation and distinction, involves the pursuit of socially recognized sameness or difference. It suggests that likeness and distinctiveness are a motivated social achievement rather than an objective state. The second pair is related to the ideological perception of realness and artifice. *Authentication* concerns the agentive construction of a genuine

or credible identity while *denaturalization* renders an identity non-genuine. The third pair, *authorization and illegitimation*, involves "the attempt to legitimate an identity through an institutional or other authority, or conversely the effort to withhold or withdraw such structural power" (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004a, p.386). The tactics of intersubjectivity are not qualities inherent in speakers or in social practices, but are intended as an analytical tool to discuss the relationship between the contextual use of language and the dynamics of identity construction.

STYLIZATION

In the section on disciplinary context, I briefly reviewed how recent works on language styling depart from Labovian variationist paradigm of sociolinguistics and regard style as a form of social action. Coupland (2001), building on Rampton's (1995) and others' research, further theorizes the concept of stylization. As Coupland constructs it, stylization refers to a more specific set of discursive practices than language styling in general, operating "in a specific mode of social action, PERFORMANCE in the strong, theatrical or quasi-theatrical sense of that term" (Coupland, 2001, p. 346). Stylized practices project personas, identities, and genres that involve known linguistic repertories and have well-formed socio-cultural profiles. They often link a speaker or an utterance to a speech event other than what is conventionally considered as the current one. As Coupland himself puts it, "stylization is therefore fundamentally metaphorical; it brings into play stereotyped

semiotic and ideological values associated with other groups, situations or times; it dislocates a speaker and utterances from the immediate speaking context" (p. 350).

The concept of stylization is particularly helpful in analyzing the stylization of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin in performative contexts and the stylized practices of various forms of online language play in this study.

SYMBOLIC MARKETS AND ALTERNATIVE MARKETS

Another useful theoretical concept is Pierre Bourdieu's notion of symbolic markets and alternative markets. For Bourdieu (1977, 1991), each linguistic utterance can be understood as having a certain value in relation to a specific linguistic market. Part of a speaker's competence is knowing how price is formed and how to produce highly valued linguistic products. However, such knowledge and ability are not evenly distributed: Dominant individuals have the capacity to impose the law of price formation on the dominated and profit from the symbolic market. For example, the designation of an official, legitimate language is an attempt by the dominant group to create a unified linguistic market during state formation. However, alternative markets exist as well, governed by their own laws of price formation, in which the dominant laws of price formation are temporarily suspended. As is shown later, Mandarin, English, Taiwanese, and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin all convey multiple, and at times contradictory, social meanings because they are valued differently in relation to different linguistic markets.

In this chapter, I have outlined the dissertation fieldwork and the structure of the dissertation. I have also presented the research questions and reviewed relevant bodies of literature. Chapter 2 turns to an introduction to the historical development and sociolinguistic situation of Taiwan to provide background information for data analysis in Chapters 4 through 6.

Chapter 2: Sociolinguistic Background of Taiwan

This chapter introduces the sociolinguistic background of Taiwan, focusing on the socio-historical developments that give rise to the interwoven issues of language, ethnic groupings, and national identity in contemporary Taiwan. Taiwan is a subtropical, mountainous island 245 miles (394 km) long by 90 miles (144 km) at its widest. The total land mass is approximately 36,000 square kilometers, and the island is slightly smaller than the Netherlands. It lies off the coast of southeastern China by the Taiwan Strait. The closest distance between Taiwan and the Fujian Province of the Chinese Mainland is around 130 kilometers. The territory of the Republic of China (ROC), generally referred to as Taiwan, consists of Taiwan proper and other smaller islands, the major ones being Penghu (the Pescadores), Kinmen (Quemoy), and Matsu (Feifel, 1994; Government Information Office, 1998; Morris, 2004). A map of Taiwan showing its geographical location in relation to nearby countries is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Map of Taiwan (Retrieved May 3, 2005, from http://www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/2-visitor/map/)

2.1 Historical Development up to 1945

The original inhabitants of Taiwan are now officially called *yuan zhumin* "Taiwan Aboriginal Peoples." They are speakers of Austronesian languages and have been divided into 14 groups of lowland peoples and 9 groups of mountain peoples (Stainton, 1999). The Chinese presence on Taiwan came relatively late. There is historical evidence that as early as the twelfth century (the Song Dynasty), Chinese people had started to immigrate to Penghu (Chen, 1997). However, to assume that there had been an intimate China-Taiwan relationship would be wrong. Until four centuries ago, there had not been permanent settlement on Taiwan. The better known part of the history of Taiwan begins with the settlement built by Dutch East India Company in the 17th century. After several years of fighting natives, Chinese and Japanese pirates, and Spanish forces from Manila, in 1636, the Dutch began their colonial administration based in today's Tainan City in southern Taiwan, one of the research sites in this study. However, the Dutch colonization did not last for long and was defeated by the Ming Dynasty loyalist, Cheng Cheng-gong, in 1661, who sought to overthrow the newly founded Ching Dynasty. The Cheng regime established its base again in today's Tainan City and became the first Chinese administration of Taiwan. During the ruling of the Cheng's family in Taiwan, the Chinese population, concentrating in the southwestern coastal plain, doubled to approximately 200,000 as a result of the migration of soldiers and their families, elite loyal to the Ming Dynasty, and peasants escaping from famines from

the southeastern coast of Chinese Mainland. Chinese schools and Confucian temples were also established in settlements and native areas. In 1683, the Cheng regime was defeated, and Taiwan was taken over by the Ching Empire (Chen, 1997; Feifel, 1994; Huang, 1993; Morris, 2004; Stainton, 1999).

Seeing Taiwan as a peripheral territory and a trouble spot, the Ching Empire restrained emigration to Taiwan, with the hope that any population there would consist of seasonal migrant laborers only. The ban was repealed in the late 18th century. The immigration movement reached its climax during this period, and according to Chen's study (1979, as cited in Huang (1993)), at the end of the 19th century the population amounted to 2,500,000. The aboriginal peoples were gradually forced to retreat to the mountain areas. Maintenance of a peaceful frontier with a limited military presence became one of the dynasty's main objectives. One of the dynasty's long-term measures to prevent rebellions was to civilize the settlers with Confucian teachings by establishing schools and Confucius temples and providing generous scholarships to encourage more Taiwan residents to seek advancement via the imperial examination system.

During this period, the majority of immigrants came from the Fujian Province and spoke dialects of Southern Min, also referred to as Hokkien or Fukienese (*Minnanhua*), which became the dominant language in Taiwan. The second largest immigration group, composed of Hakka speakers, came from eastern Guangdong, the province next to Fujian. The immigrants from Fujian can be

subdivided into two groups: people originating from Quanzhou and from Zhangzhou on the Mainland. The dialect varieties of Southern Min in Taiwan were mainly associated with these two particular hometowns. The Southern Min prevalent in Taiwan today, which is broadly called *Taiwanese*, is a mixture of the two dialects (Hong, 1992).

In the course of time, a struggle for the best parts of the land led to violent conflicts between the various groups. However, a Taiwanese identity independent of the Chinese identity gradually developed and was further strengthened by the cession of Taiwan to Japan after the Ching dynasty lost the Sino-Japanese War in 1895 (Van de Berg, 1986). That a Taiwanese identity had been formed roughly at this stage can be supported by statistical evidence: only 0.22% of the population decided to leave Taiwan during the two-year postwar grace period when Taiwan residents could freely decide whether they wanted to leave or stay under Japanese colonization (Huang, 1993). Immediately after the Sino-Japanese War, feeling forsaken by the Ching dynasty, the Taiwanese elite formulated a strategy for avoiding Japanese colonization: the founding of an independent Taiwan Republic, which could not be legally ceded by Ching. The resistance, however, was squashed by the Japanese imperial power (Morris, 2004).

During its governing of Taiwan, Japan intended to assimilate Taiwanese people by the promotion of Japanese language and culture. Japanese was proclaimed as the national language and the medium of schooling. Southern Min and Hakka

were at first tolerated but banned entirely in 1937 after four decades of gradual acculturation campaigns. While these high-handed policies induced resentment and various violent and nonviolent rebellions, Japanese administration had also transformed Taiwan into a more modernized land.

In 1945, Japan surrendered to the Allies, bringing an end to the Second World War. According to the Cairo Declaration, Taiwan was returned to China, which opened a new era of Taiwanese history. A summary of administrations on Taiwan up to 1945 is provided in Table 1.

TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIONS OF TAIWAN UP TO 1945

1636-1661	Dutch West India Company
1661-1683	Cheng's Regime (Ming Dynasty Loyalists)
1683-1895	Ching Dynasty
1895-1945	Japan

2.2 Historical Development from 1945 to 1987

The typical reaction of Taiwanese people to the news of the surrender of Japan was joy and elation. After being ruled by the Japanese colonial administration for fifty years, the Taiwanese people were delighted at the unification of Taiwan to China, which many of them considered their motherland. However, the sense of appreciation did not last long, as the Taiwanese people soon learned their place under the government of the Republic of China (ROC), which was wholly dominated by the *Kuo Ming Tang,* the Chinese Nationalist Party (a.k.a. KMT), and were confronted with the many differences between themselves and the Chinese people (hereafter *Mainlanders*). First of all, the two groups did not speak the same language. The national language of the ROC government was Mandarin, to which Taiwanese people had no prior access. Second, having lived for 50 years under the government of the former enemy of China, Taiwanese people were often considered

brainwashed and untrustworthy by the Chinese government. The vacuum of higher government positions due to the retreat of Japanese was filled by Mainlanders who most likely were much less qualified for the job than their Taiwanese subordinates. Only 22 percent of the posts in the KMT official bureaucracy were held by Taiwanese, as opposed to 56 percent of the posts under the Japanese colonization (Lai, Myers, & Wou, 1991). The colonial attitude many Mainlanders held, the corrupt administration, and the accumulating misunderstanding and distrust between the Taiwanese people and Mainlanders gave rise to a large-scale uprising beginning on February 28, 1947, which was suppressed by the Chinese army in Taiwan and the reinforcements sent from the Chinese Mainland by Chiang Kai-shek.

The February 28 incident is influential in the modern history of Taiwan. It was considered mutiny by the government and resulted in a great number of missing and casualties. Final estimates of the casualties vary widely, from an official government report's estimation of 6,300 to anti-KMT activists' estimation of 20,000. After the suppression of the uprising, the government began arresting people suspected of being supportive of the incident, especially among the Taiwanese elite. The incident and the following "white terror" eliminated the core of the Taiwanese local political leadership and traumatized the relationship between the Mainlanders and the Taiwanese people. The influence of the incident lasts even in the politics and life of many Taiwanese today (Chen, 1997; Feifel, 1994; Morris, 2004; Wu, 1993).

In 1949, the Nationalist Government lost the civil war with the Chinese communists and retreated to Taiwan, making Taiwan the last territory of Nationalist China/ROC. The central government was reestablished in Taipei. From 1945 to 1949, approximately 600,000 to 1,000,000 Chinese people immigrated from the Chinese Mainland to Taiwan (Xu, 1990, as cited in Feifel, 1994). The history of large-scale Chinese immigration came to an end with the movement of the government in 1949. From then on, the entire of Taiwanese population could be divided into four major ethnic groups: Mainlanders, Southern Min, Hakka, and Aboriginal Peoples, with the Southern Min group dominant in number. Huang (1993) estimates the population distribution with respect to ethnic origin: Southern Min, 73.3%; Mainlanders, 13%; Hakka, 12%; and Aboriginal Peoples, 1.7%. There are also various folk categorizations of ethnic groups. In contrast to Mainlanders *waishengren* 'out-of-province people' are terms such as *benshengren* 'provincial people' and *Taiwanren* 'Taiwan people', both of which generally refer to the non-Mainlander Chinese population, i.e., the Southern Min and Hakka groups. However, in certain contexts, these terms are limited to the Southern Min group only, thus excluding speakers of Hakka. The term *taiwanren*, literally Taiwan people or Taiwanese, therefore, has multiple meanings. In its broadest sense, *taiwanren* is equivalent to Taiwanese in English and includes all people in Taiwan. In its narrowest sense, *taiwanren* refers only to the Southern Min group, the dominant group in number.

The tension between Mainlanders and *benshengren* 'the provincial people' remained severe after the retreat of Nationalist government in 1949. The alienation between the two groups manifested itself most transparently in four areas: residential segregation, limitation of government employment for *benshengren*, patterns of intermarriage, and linguistic repertories (and consequently, linguistic capital) (Gates, 1981, as cited in Feifel, 1994). Of the most relevance here is the language policy to promote Mandarin as the national and the only legitimate language. Effective from 1956, all languages other than Mandarin were banned from institutional settings.

During 1945 to 1987, Taiwan was under the Emergency Decree. The KMT, headed by Chiang Kai-shek, was the only legal political party. While the ROC government in Taiwan still retained international support (especially that of the US) initially as the legitimate administration representing China, the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the Chinese Mainland gradually established its status in international society. In 1971, the ROC delegation walked out of the United Nations General Assembly immediately before the assembly voted to award China's UN seat to the PRC. In 1972, Nixon, then president of the United States, which had been ROC's long-term major supporter, visited China and ended the ROC's special relationship with the United States by signing the Shanghai Communiqué, which acknowledged that there is only one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. In 1979, the United States officially severed the diplomatic relations with the ROC.

Since the 1970's, Taiwan has become more and more diplomatically isolated. This political alienation from international society has raised a sense of crisis and nationalism and has generated a common awareness among Taiwanese of the unique situation Taiwan is facing.

Despite its political isolation in international society and its one-party dictatorship, Taiwan underwent tremendous economic transformation during this period. Successful economic policies resulted in rapid industrialization in the 1960's, and today Taiwan has become a major economic power in Asia and one of the most important exporting countries on a global scale (Chen, 1997; Morris, 2004).

2.3 Historical Development after 1987

The years of 1986 and 1987 mark the beginning of another era of Taiwanese modern history. As early as in the 1985, the president at that time, Chiang Ching-guo, had signaled that a political reform toward democracy would soon take place. Though a Mainlander who inherited the presidency from his father, Chiang Kai-shek, Chiang Ching-guo had a much more tolerant view of Taiwanese culture and political activity and was devoted to increasing Taiwanese participation at the highest levels of the ROC administration. In his later years, he openly identified himself as a Taiwanese. In 1986, the first recognized opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was founded. In 1987, the Emergency Decree

was repealed. After the death of Chiang Ching-guo in 1988, then vice-president Lee Teng-hui succeeded to the presidency and became the first president of Southern Min heritage who had been born in Taiwan. Lee upheld Chiang's democratic reform, and in 1991, the government terminated the "Period of National Mobilization for Suppression of the Communist Rebellion," i.e., martial law, and the limitations on constitutional freedoms it had mandated for four decades. Since then, certain articles of the ROC constitution have been amended, which paved the way for the direct elections of the entire National Assembly and Legislature as well as the first direct presidential election in 1996.

The rapid political change had a tremendous impact on language use in Taiwan. The major opposition party, the DPP, was mainly composed of members of the Southern Min group who tended to identify themselves as Taiwanese (rather than Chinese) and to support Taiwanese independence. The DPP has made the Taiwanese language a symbol of the growth of the awareness of a Taiwanese identity, and language has also become an effective means to rally support in political campaigns (Hsiau, 1997). The DPP also plays an important role in the promotion of Taiwanese in educational settings. The local Taiwanese languages have been granted some official status, first through the language and education policy of the local administrations headed by DPP politicians. In 1990, the Minister of Education, Mao, showed his support to the DPP mayors and county magistrates' proposal to include local language and cultural education in the curriculum of

elementary school and junior high school in areas under their governance. In the same year, censorship of ethnic languages in the media was loosened. By 1993, the Ministry of Education had started designing educational materials for local languages. In the same year, the regulations on the proportion of Taiwanese in media were entirely repealed (Huang, 1993). Since 1996, courses on local languages and cultures have been designated as requirements in elementary and junior high school curricula.

However, the progress in the promotion of local Taiwanese languages has not significantly transformed the language profile of Taiwan. Although gaining in prestige, Taiwanese is still generally considered a less prestigious language than Mandarin and the courses in local languages are in elementary school and junior high school curricula are often regarded as peripheral.

In 2000, the DPP candidate, Chen Shui-bian, won his victory in the second direct presidential election and ended the KMT's 50 years of consecutive governance in Taiwan. The once illegal pro-independence party became the governing party.

2.4 Taiwan and China

During the 20 years of rapid socio-political change since the mid 1980's, national and ethnic identities have emerged as a central issue in Taiwanese politics. With their politically unsettled status in the international community, the Taiwanese

people have striven to create a future for their homeland. Possible scenarios range from unification with China to complete Taiwanese independence. Language, ethnic identity, and political inclination toward a national identity are all interwoven. In current politics in Taiwan, a distinction is often made between 'the greenish parties', among which is the DPP, and 'the blueish parties', among which is the KMT. The former are composed mainly of members from the Southern Min group and other local Taiwanese groups and are inclined toward the more radical versions of Taiwanese independence with regard to national identity. The latter are largely made up of Mainlanders and their descedents and tend to seek a feasible means to unify with China without losing Taiwan's autonomous status. Political inclination is also often associated with regionality. In the recent legislative election of 2001, a clear regional tendency emerged. The blueish parties dominated in Northern Taiwan, where a larger Mainlander population resides, while the greenish parties dominated in Southern and Eastern Taiwan, which are less developed than Northern Taiwan with the exception of a few cities.

Taiwan's historical development has complicated the issue of identity among Taiwanese people. On the one hand, their Chinese cultural and language heritage makes it difficult to desert "Chineseness" entirely. On the other hand, social and political developments have shaped a unique Taiwanese identity that oftentimes conflicts with the Chinese one, when "Chinese" means "of Mainland China."

Public opinion surveys about the identity of Taiwanese people have been conducted several times. Table 2 summarizes the results.

TABLE 2. RESULTS OF PUBLIC POLLS WITH REGARD TO SUBJECTS' SELF IDENTITY TOWARD THE CATEGORIES OF 'TAIWANESE' AND 'CHINESE' (YOU, 1996)

Identity	1991	1993	1995
Taiwanese	13.5%	28.55%	Approx. 35%
Taiwanese and Chinese	73.2%	36.02%	Approx. 30%
Chinese	12.9%	35.42%	Approx. 34%

The fluctuation is related to the political situation at the time the polls were conducted, but the results seem to suggest a tendency among Taiwanese to choose between polarized identities (You, 1996). The situation is further complicated by the recent political and military tension between China and Taiwan, on the one hand, and the increasing cooperation in the economic and cultural arenas, on the other. The PRC's strategy to isolate Taiwan diplomatically excludes Taiwan from international organizations as political as the United Nations and as livelihood-related as the World Health Organization. Such diplomatic actions are not only political; they could be deadly: in September 1999, after a disastrous earthquake struck Taiwan, causing over 2,000 deaths, the PRC government delayed UN and Russian rescue teams from reaching Taiwan for more than two days with the argument that since Taiwan is a part of China, the aid should be channeled through Beijing (Agence France Presse, as cited in Morris (2004)). Diplomatic actions such

as these have generated great enmity towards the PRC among many Taiwanese, and the frequent military threat further fuels the negative sentiments. In the most recent campaigns of presidential election taking place in March 2004, with regard to issues of national identity, even the bluish parties leaned toward the less radical version of Taiwan independence more than ever; some political commentators have pointed out that the call for unification with China is growing more marginalized in the Taiwanese politics (Xin Hua Wang, 2004).

Despite the antipathy toward the PRC government's diplomatic and militant strategies, many Taiwanese businesses see the profits to be made with China's rich supply of cheap labor, lower environmental costs, and overlap in linguistic repertories and have invested more than 100 billion US dollars, which, to a certain degree, has endangered Taiwan's own industrial base (Hsing, 1998). The large trade between Taiwan and China makes many observers believe that some kind of unification is inevitable in the future (Morris, 2004).

Such is the entangled contradiction and the ambivalence toward Chinese-ness and Taiwanese-ness that the Taiwanese society has experienced on multiple levels: on the one hand, the socio-political developments within the island have raised an awareness of ethnic group boundaries and have created opposition between Mainlanders and the local Taiwanese groups in many contexts. On the other hand, the more recent contact with China simultaneously generates solidarity among fellow Taiwanese against the PRC, a keener consciousness of a Taiwanese

identity, and an understanding of the strong economic and cultural links between Taiwan and China. As group boundaries are often linked to language, one goal of this study is to investigate whether such ambivalence is mediated through language use and language attitudes in Taiwanese people's daily life.

2.5 Language Use in Taiwan

Language policies under the KMT's Mandarin movement created a strict boundary between the function of Mandarin and local Taiwanese languages. Mandarin was promoted as the only legitimate language, and the other local languages were forced into private domains. Recent socio-political developments have contributed to the blurring of such boundaries. However, although local Taiwanese languages, especially Taiwanese, are gaining prestige, Mandarin is still considered the most overtly prestigious language in most contexts.

Two other salient factors should not be neglected in understanding language use in Taiwan today, namely, language shift between generations and differences in language use between rural and urban areas (Huang, 1993; Su, 2000). In rural areas, the use of Taiwanese prevails. It is the language of daily life, spoken within the family and among friends and used in local institutions. Members of the younger generation learn Mandarin at school but maintain fluent Taiwanese ability. In contrast, in urban areas, where the majority of Mainlanders reside, the use of Mandarin has penetrated many informal settings. Thus, language shift between

generations is particularly salient in these areas, where many members of younger generations of Southern Min heritage have limited ability in their parents' native language and speak predominantly Mandarin. This situation is not uncommon among Southern Min families in urban areas in which grandparents and grandchildren can hardly communicate and do not speak much of each other's dominant languages.

One result of the interaction between age and region is that Mandarin spoken with heavy influence from Taiwanese phonology, popularly referred to as *Taiwan guoyu* "Taiwanese-accented Mandarin," is more common among the older generation and among members of younger generations who grow up outside of urban areas. Hence, in the spirit of Ochs' theory of indexicality (1992), reviewed in section 1.2.2, we may say the degree of the influence of Taiwanese phonology in Mandarin has come to index age and region. Furthermore, since rurality and older age often indicate a lack of adequate educational access or facilities, use of a Taiwanese accent when speaking Mandarin is indirectly linked with undesired qualities such as ignorance or outdatedness. On the other hand, similar to many other regional varieties reported in different societies, such an accent has local prestige and is associated with friendliness, congeniality, and local color. It is common for categorical social attributes to be associated with linguistic varieties, and the investigation of the semiotic processes through which linguistic features and social images are connected has been an important research theme in

sociolinguistics and anthropology. Likely due to the recent hostile relationship between China and Taiwan and the rise of a Taiwanese identity, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, though often considered unsophisticated, is increasingly appreciated for its uniqueness, i.e., the fact that it belongs only to Taiwanese society.

It is also common for bilingual Taiwanese speakers to code-switch between Mandarin and Taiwanese in response to different situations and interpersonal relationships with interlocutors; their motivations can be analyzed in terms of Myers-Scotton's (1993) taxonomy of types of code-switching and the social function of each. For example, code-switching from Mandarin to Taiwanese may index informality and emphasize ethnicity and solidarity while at the same time implying a lack of sophistication. On the other hand, code-switching from Taiwanese to Mandarin may produce a sense of modernity and intellectuality while simultaneously implying a stronger sense of "Chineseness." Different directions of code-switching may influence how an utterance is interpreted, and the social meanings of an instance of code-switching are intimately related to the indexical values attached to linguistic varieties available to speakers. One major goal of the research project, therefore, is to investigate how college students from two prestigious universities in Taiwan construct their identities (e.g., identities as college students, ethnic identities, national identities, and regional identities) through the

use of Mandarin, Taiwanese, and different accents, which have multiple social meanings.

2.6 Mandarin and Taiwanese in Taiwan

As mentioned earlier, Taiwanese derives from a dialect of Southern Min, a Chinese language from southern China. Taiwanese and Mandarin, a Chinese language from northern China, belong to the same language family, Sino-Tibetan, but are mutually unintelligible. Although there are cognates between the two languages, Taiwanese and Mandarin differ significantly in phonology, syntax, morphology, etc.

After 50 years of language contact, the Mandarin spoken in Taiwan shows phonological, lexical, and syntactic differences from *putonghua*, the standard variety of Mandarin spoken in Mainland China. Phonologically, the standard Mandarin in Taiwan, or *guoyu* "national language," retains the retroflex syllable-initial fricatives and affricates, but tends to fully realize the tones and leave out the retroflex suffix common in the Beijing variety. In contrast, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is most commonly associated with the replacement of retroflex consonants with more forward dental sibilants. More discussions of phonological features associated with Taiwanese-accented Mandarin are provided in later chapters.

2.7 Taipei and Tainan

Taipei City and Tainan City are respectively the largest and the fourth largest cities in Taiwan and in many ways considered the cities representatives of the northern and southern regions of the island. In the terminology of land administration, Taiwan is divided into four regions: northern, central, southern, and eastern. The map below shows the locations of Taipei City and Tainan City and marks the four-way division with colors.

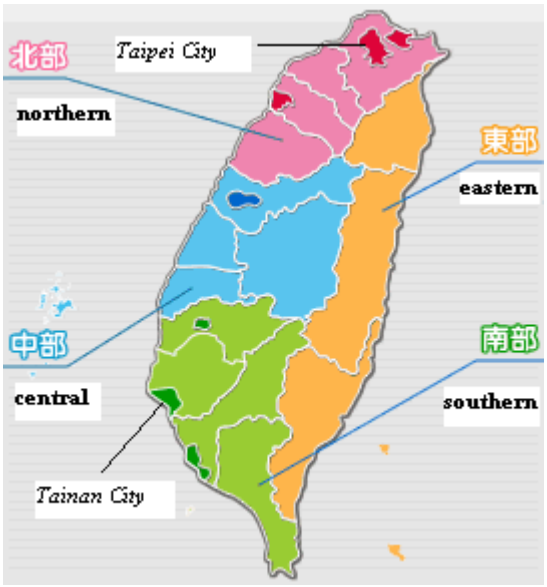

Figure 2. A map of Taiwan with a 4-way regional division (Retrieved May 3, 2005 and adapted from http://www.silktour.com.tw/travel/index/taiwan_map.gif)

Although there is a precise regional division in land administration and scholarly works concerning land development, in popular discourses the North and

the South are cultural concepts loosely tied to geographic locations. In general, the North is often linked with urbanity, cosmopolitan-ness, and personality traits such as shrewdness, while South is often connected with authentic Taiwanese culture and characteristics such as straightforwardness and congeniality. More discussion of the popular discourses of the North and the South is provided in Chapter 4. In the remaining part of this section, I briefly describe Taipei City and Tainan City, the two sites of fieldwork located in the northern and southern regions respectively.

Taipei City is the capital as well as the cultural, political, and economic center of Taiwan. It is located in the north of Taiwan, is widely recognized as the most modernized and internationalized city on the island, and has a population of 2622,561 according the website of Taipei City Government (Taipei City Government). With regard to labor market structure, the majority of employed population participates in service and manufacturing, with a very small fraction in agriculture. The ethnic makeup of the Taipei population is also more diverse than that of the rest of Taiwan, composed of the four major ethnic groups (Southern Min, Mainlander, Hakka, Aboriginal Peoples) as well as long-term or short-term immigrants from western countries and southeast Asia. Taipei City also houses several major universities in Taiwan, among which is National Taiwan University (NTU), one of the fieldwork sites of this study. In recent years, one of the most important goals of the Taiwanese and Taipei administrations is to develop Taipei

into an Asia-Pacific business hub (see Tables 3, 4, 5 below for more information on the Taipei City population).

Tainan City is the fourth largest city in Taiwan and the second largest (next to Kaohsiung City) in the southern region. Although the fourth largest city, it has a considerably smaller population than Taipei City (see Table 3 below), and is often described by my interviewees as a city with a small-town feeling and a slower-paced life style. It is commonly known as *Fucheng*, the ancient capital and one of the earliest settlements in the Taiwanese history, and houses seven first-rank national historic sites, which account for almost one-third of national historic sites of the same rank. Tainanites are very aware of their hometown's rich historic and cultural heritage, and the city government makes a great effort to attract national and international tourists. According to the website of Tainan City Government, the major goals of current administration are to develop Tainan City into a Renaissance station and a green waterfront city, a technology center (with the newly established Tainan industrial park), and a commercial and shopping center (Tainan City Government, 2005). Tainan City also houses National Cheng Kung University (NCKU), the largest and most prestigious university in southern Taiwan and another site of fieldwork of this research project. Tables 3, 4, and 5 below provide comparisons of population of the Taiwan area, Taipei City, and Tainan City. Both Taipei City and Tainan City excel the national average in population density, percentage of employed population in service-providing industries, and percentage

of population with higher education; but there are also significant inter-city differences.

TABLE 3. POPULATION TOTAL AND DENSITY IN TAIWAN AREA, TAIPEI CITY, AND TAINAN CITY (ADAPTED FROM DIRECTORATE-GENERAL OF BUDGET, 2003)

	Population Total (thousand person)	Area (km^2)	Population Density (person/ km^2)
Taiwan Area	22493	35981.2	625.13
Taipei City	2632	271.8	9683.59
Tainan City	748	175.6	4258.59

TABLE 4. INDUSTRY OF EMPLOYED PERSONS IN TAIWAN AREA (ADAPTED FROM DIRECTORATE-GENERAL OF BUDGET, 2003)

	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Animal Husbandry (%)	Goods-producing Industries (%)		Service-producing Industries (%)	Total Employed Persons (thousands)
			Manufacturing (%)		
Taiwan Area	7.27	34.83	27.05	57.90	9573
Northern Region	1.61	34.84	27.44	63.55	4164
Taipei City	0.43	19.48	13.77	80.08	1119
Southern Region	10.88	33.62	25.57	55.49	2776
Tainan City	2.29	36.72	31.36	60.99	331

TABLE 5. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF CIVILIAN POPULATION AGED 15 YEARS AND OVER IN TAIWAN AREA (ADAPTED FROM DIRECTORATE-GENERAL OF BUDGET, 2003)

	Junior High & Below (%)	Senior High & Vocational (%)	Junior College & Above (%)	Total (Thousands)
Taiwan Area	38.91	33.71	27.38	17572
Northern Region	33.30	34.38	32.32	7648
Taipei City	19.46	32.14	48.40	2113
Southern Region	41.47	33.73	24.80	5066
Tainan City	32.91	33.30	33.79	586

Language use in Taipei City and Tainan City shows some differences; yet the differences are by no means categorical. The Taipei City area is widely recognized by Taiwanese people as the place where generational language shift is the most salient. Young people of Southern Min heritage often have quite limited ability in their parents' native language. Taking my interviewees for example, those from Tainan generally have a better command of the Taiwanese language than their Taipei peers. However, while the use of Taiwanese appears to be more prevalent in the Tainan City, there are also Tainanites who have limited proficiency in the Taiwanese language, especially better educated women of the younger generations growing up within Tainan City. Those from the neighboring Tainan County, in

contrast, almost invariably have competence to carry out at least daily conversations in Taiwanese.

This chapter introduces the sociolinguistic background of Taiwan and the two cities where fieldwork was conducted. It recounts the important historical developments that contribute to the complexity involved in contemporary Taiwan, such as the ambivalence of Taiwan's national status from both the international and Taiwan's perspectives, Taiwan's entangled relationship with China, the North and the South as two contrastive cultural concepts within the island, ethnic boundaries, and dominant language ideologies concerning Mandarin, Taiwanese, and other local languages. The information provided here serves to scaffold the analysis in later chapters.

Chapter 3: Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

This chapter outlines methods of data collection and analysis employed in this study. One major goal of this project is to investigate how Taiwanese college students interact with each other in an environment where regionality is highlighted and how their talk about themselves and "others" reveals their attitudes concerning group boundaries, language ownership, and identities. College students are a particularly interesting group to study because until college, students generally study in local schools and have minimal experience interacting with people from other regions. College students are also at the age when they are first allowed to participate in voting and campaign activities and are in the process of forming an elite awareness. Therefore, examining how college students position themselves in relation to other significant groups through use of language and accents that have multiple social meanings may offer us insights into how linguistic practices serve as a resource for Taiwanese students to construct complex identities. Because the research project investigates both face-to-face interaction and Internet communication and their relationship with language identities and ideologies, there are two sets of methods of data collection.

3.1 Research Site

3.1.1 Face-to-face Interaction

There are four sites of research located in different parts of Taiwan. The first two sites of research are two student organizations at National Taiwan University (NTU). Located in Taipei, NTU is one of the most prestigious universities (and sometimes considered the most prestigious university) in Taiwan. The two student organizations are the C.Y. Chorus—which is composed of alumni of two high schools with nation-wide prestige in Taipei, Taipei Municipal Jian-Guo High School and Taipei Municipal First Girls' High school—and the Tainan Student Association, which is made up with students from Tainan City and County.[3] I chose the two student organizations as the major sites of research because regional differences play a major role in language use and identities in Taiwan. The two regions also display very different political stances: the DPP, the party composed mainly of members of Southern Min group, has established a strong political dominance in Tainan, while such is not the case in Taipei. As previously mentioned, political orientation is very often connected with language and identities in recent political campaigns.

To provide a set of data for comparison, I also conducted fieldwork at National Cheng-Kung University (NCKU), which is located in Tainan City. NCKU

[3] Technically, the C.Y. chorus is an organization independent of NTU. It is composed of alumni of the two high schools regardless the universities they attend. However, members of the chorus are

is probably the most prestigious university in Southern Taiwan. The sites of research at NCKU are two alumni associations. I collected data from members of Jian-Bei Alumni Association, a student organization composed of alumni from the two aforementioned high schools in Taipei, Taipei Municipal Jian-Guo High School and Taipei Municipal First Girls' High school. Since members of Jian-Bei Alumni association and the C.Y. chorus graduated from the same high schools, data collected from both organizations may provide us insights into how region of college attended influences students' linguistic practices and identities. For example, are NCKU students from Taipei more aware of regional differences than their high school peers in Taipei? Do Taipei students at NCKU relate or accommodate to southerners? How do the attitudinal differences between Taipei students at NTU and NCKU influence their language use, and vice versa? We shall see answers to these questions in the following chapters of data analysis. I also recruited members of Tainan Student Association at NCKU, who are from the local area, to investigate how place of residence shapes their identities and language use. For example, do native Tainan students and students from Taipei at NCKU use language in different ways? Furthermore, I am also interested in exploring how Taipei and Tainan are socially constructed by students from the 4 groups as two distinct cultural places. The four research sites are summarized in Table 1 below.

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predominantly NTU students, and the NTU subsection of the chorus is also an officially registered

TABLE 1. RESEARCH SITES FOR FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTIONS

NTU (Taipei)	C.Y. Chorus (composed of Jian-Bei alumni)
	Tainan Student Association
NCKU (Tainan)	Jian-Bei Alumni Association
	Tainan Student Association

Collecting data from these sites enables me to answer research question (1) raised in Chapter 1: How do Taiwanese college students of different backgrounds with respect to region of college attended, region of origin, and urbanness of origin, use the available linguistic resources in speaking to create complex identities?

3.1.2 Internet Interaction

The major sites of Internet data collection are the electronic bulletin boards of the four student organizations in question. The C.Y. Chorus has bulletin boards on their organization website and on *PTT*, a BBS site affiliated with NTU. The Tainan Student Association at NTU has similar boards on *Buliangniu* "bad cows," another BBS site loosely affiliated with NTU. The Jian-Bei Alumni Association and Tainan Student Association at NCKU both have bulletin boards at *Meng zhi Dadi* "dream land," a BBS site affiliated with NCKU. Those bulletin boards represent close-knit social networks: frequent posters of these bulletin boards were all

student organization under the name of Choral Music Club.

members of the respective student organizations and knew each other both in terms of their online and offline identities. Linguistic practices in public bulletin boards in popular Taiwan-based portal websites, such as *tw.yahoo.com* and *www.pchome.com.tw* are also casually observed. These bulletin boards are frequented by Internet users who do not necessarily know each other in their offline environment. The different relationships in the two environments thus may have varying degree of influences and constraints on language use on the Internet. Although my main focus is on language use in the bulletin boards that belong to the student organizations in question, examining both yields a wider range of patterns of language use and helps reveal the varying practices and functions of dialect styling and language switching.

3.2 Data Collection

3.2.1 Speech Data

I have collected three sorts of data from the four student groups at NTU and at NCKU: naturally occurring interactions, stage performances, and interviews. The three sets of data complement one another. Since the objective is to investigate how language ideologies are manifested in daily linguistic practices and how language is used to construct identities, interactional data provide a direct means for the analysis of everyday linguistic practices while interview data may reveal speaker's language attitudes in a more explicit manner. Performative events in these student groups also

serve as interesting locus to investigate how certain identities are highlighted through language use.

INTERACTIONAL DATA

The approaches in gathering interactional data are qualitative participant observation and participants' self-recording. I approached the students in the four student organizations at NTU and at NCKU, obtained their permission, observed their group dynamics and language use, and tape-recorded and video-recorded their informal activities in a variety of contexts, such as lunch-time gatherings, rehearsals, organization meetings, etc.

Although participant observation is a central technique in ethnographic methodology (Duranti, 1997; Hymes, 1964), an associated problem is identified as the "observer's paradox," which refers to the effect and disturbance an observer creates by joining the focal group of his/her research (Johnstone, 2000; Milroy, 1987). To reduce the negative effects caused by researchers, the tape-recording equipment was also left at the organizations' lunch tables to record participants' interaction without my presence. Throughout the fieldwork, approximately 50-60 hours of natural conversation were recorded. Because of limitation of scope and length, in the following chapters of analysis, I mainly focus my discussion on interview and performative data. However, the observations I made during the collection of the naturally occurring data helped me gain a more complete

understanding of the group dynamics and the spectrum of local metacommunicative repertoire (Briggs, 1986).

PERFORMATIVE DATA

During the fieldwork, I videotaped or acquired a video of one annual performative/social event of each student organization. Each lasted approximately 1 to 2 hours. During those events, the most relevant identities are often highlighted through a variety of verbal and non-verbal practices. Such data, therefore, serve as a fruitful locus to investigate the dynamic nature of group identity construction, language use, and ideologies of language.

INTERVIEW DATA

Students from the four groups at NTU and NCKU were also recruited to participate in semi-structured interviews (n=24 at NTU; n=20 at NCKU). Interviewees are evenly split regarding gender. Most of the interviews were conducted one-on-one, with a few in groups of 2 to 3, depending on the interviewees' preferences. The interviews were held either indoors or outdoors, in a variety of locations on or close to the NTU and NCKU campuses, such as an apartment, a quiet corner on campus, a café, etc., and were both audio- and video-recorded to facilitate the analysis of the content as well as the contextualization cues (Gumperz, 1982) expressed through the interviews. I intended to make the

atmosphere of the interviews informal and comfortable to the participants. The information gathered in the interview includes:

(1) Demographic information about the speakers and their families, their educational histories, the sort of social networks in which they participate, and their familiarity with Internet culture.

(2) Self-reports on language use in face-to-face communication and on the Internet, including when and where they believe they use Mandarin, Taiwanese, or Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin or engage in switching between these accents and languages.

(3) Self-reports on the performative aspect of language use and its function.

(4) Information about issues of language and identities in Taiwan including questions on attitudes toward the relative "values" of various languages and dialects/accents and the way societal attitudes towards these varieties have changed.

(5) Information about issues of language and identities in relation to China.

The length of the interviews typically ranges from 1 hour to 2.5 hours.

3.2.2 Internet Data

INTERACTIONAL DATA

The approach to collecting Internet interactional data was participant observation. I established accesses to the electronic bulletin boards of the four

student groups and observed and logged messages on the bulletin boards. The interactional data from the Internet and from face-to-face communication complement each other in the investigation of linguistic practices, identities, and ideologies in this project. Internet interaction is by no means simply the written version of face-to-face communication. As the vast literature on computer-mediated communication suggests, Internet interaction involves newly emergent issues such that computer-mediated communication has become a research discipline of its own. Considering data in both realms gives a more complete picture of language use in the modern information age and sheds light on how speakers or Internet users make use of the linguistic resources at their disposal to create language styles when the mode of communication changes. An outline of methods of data collection is provided in Table 2. The data were collected over a 14-month span.

TABLE 2. OUTLINE OF METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

		Face to Face			Online
		Interaction	Performance	Interview	Interaction
NTU (Taipei)	C.Y. Chorus (Jian-Bei Alumni)	√	√ (1)	√ 12(6/6)	√
	Tainan Student Association	√	√ (1)	√ 12(6/6)	√
NCKU (Tainan)	Jian-Bei Alumni Association	√	√ (1)	√ 10(5/5)	√
	Tainan Student Association	√	√ (1)	√ 10(5/5)	√

3.3 Methods of Data Analysis

Each participant either selected a pseudonym for him- or herself or was identified by initials instead of full names. The relevant portions of the speech data from natural conversations and interviews were transcribed into Chinese script and English romanization, converted to phonetic transcription, keyed in, translated into English, and stored electronically. The Internet interactional data were also stored electronically. The data then were analyzed at the levels of linguistic features, communicative functions, and language attitudes and ideologies.

3.3.1 Linguistic Variation and Code-switching

The research project investigates instances of code-switching and certain phonological characteristics associated with various accents. The investigation of the phonological features reveals how speakers conceptualize what constitutes various dialects in the Taiwanese context. I examine the use of these features in dialect styling in face-to-face communication and on the Internet and the different ways these features and code-switching are used in performative contexts and in language play. I also explore how attitudes, ideologies, and identities are constructed and contested through these linguistic features in the everyday use of language.

3.3.2 Communicative Function and Performative Elements

Here, I investigate the context where dialect styling and language switching occur, the communicative functions of dialect styling or language switching, and the perceived effects of these linguistic practices.

3.3.3 Language Attitudes and Ideologies

In this study, I examine the participants' implicit and explicit attitudes toward languages and dialects in Taiwan, and for the Internet data, attitudes toward language and literacy. The three levels of investigation are in fact interwoven with each other, and the investigation of any level needs to take other levels into consideration.

Rather than generalizing the results to larger community to investigate language change, as traditional quantitative sociolinguistics has done, this research project is interested in a range of linguistic practices Taiwanese college students display in identity construction and the process by which members of the student organizations negotiate and create social meanings of languages and accents in Taiwan.

3.4 Romanization and Transcription Conventions

The romanization of Mandarin Chinese in this study follows the system of *pinyin*, a spelling system widely used for pedagogical purposes in China and in international contexts. The romanization of Taiwanese generally follows Cheng (1989) with certain modifications. A vowel followed by a capital N refers to a nasalized vowel. Unless indicated otherwise, the romanized terms appear in the study refer to terms or phrases in Mandarin. The transcripts of conversational data

partially follow the conventions of Conversational Analysis (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). Some of the more frequently used symbols are listed below.

(1) The symbol = indicates conversational turns that lack a pause between speakers.

(2) The symbol [indicates an overlap in speech.

(3) The symbol (.) indicates a pause.

Chapter 4: The Role of Language in the Construction of Regional Differences in Taiwan

The exploration of the role of region in language use is not a new concept in sociolinguistics. Since the early study of dialectology, region has been treated as a basic independent variable explaining patterns of language variation; isoglosses are often found to coincide with natural geographical boundaries. In these earlier studies (e.g., Kurath, Hanley, Bloch, & Lowman, 1939-1943), region was taken as the equivalent of geographic area, and it is often assumed that there is a one-to-one mapping between a definable geographical territory and particular linguistic features.

As societies become more mobile and sociolinguistics began to place less and less emphasis on the pursuit of a fairly homogeneous speech community as its field of study, the investigation of the relationship between region and language has gradually switched from a more etic view to a more emic perspective. Preston's work on perceptual dialectology (1989) represents an attempt to go beyond traditional dialectologist's tendency toward static dialect descriptions in order to investigate the dialect boundaries as identified by non-linguists. Johnstone (1999) considers regionally-marked speech forms as a semiotic and rhetorical resource for self-expression in the contemporary world and emphasizes the distinction between physical space and cultural place, a view that has long been adopted and advocated

by cultural geographers and anthropologists such as Relph (1976), Feld and Basso (1996), and Low & Lawrence-Zuniga (2003). Lane (2000) discusses ethnodialectology as an interdisciplinary approach that departs from the static view of traditional dialectology and recognizes the fluidity of social and linguistic identity as located in the dynamics of interactions between individuals whose identities are reconstructed through everyday experiences. In other words, increasingly, sociolinguists have viewed region as a fluid concept constantly constructed and reshaped through daily interactions, media, and popular discourse, rather than as a bounded geographical territory.

In this chapter, I explore how the popular idea of a regional contrast between the North and the South is constructed through various means in Taiwanese society. Rather than attempting to validate (or invalidate) the factuality of regional differences as manifested in the popular discourses, this chapter recognizes the idea of regional contrast as socially constructed; it investigates the intricately interwoven relationships between ideologies about languages and regional differences in the Taiwanese context. Through a careful examination of the interconnection between historical and economic developments, political contestation, and various levels of language use, we may begin to understand how language plays a role in the construction of regional differences, how the social meanings of linguistic varieties in question have come to be understood as they are in the current context of Taiwanese society, and how speakers as social agents make use of linguistic

resources to construct and perform their identities and to achieve various communicative goals in their daily life.

This chapter is structured as follows: it begins with an introduction to the socio-historical development of the North and the South as two distinctive regions and proceeds with an overview and a case study of contemporary media discourse as both reflecting and reshaping regional awareness of and language ideologies in contemporary Taiwanese society. The discussions of the socio-historical development and media discourse about regional differences serve as a backdrop against which the ensuing discussions on local discursive and linguistic practices in the university settings where I conducted fieldwork can be located. The following sections focus on the discursive and linguistic constructions of regional identities in interviews and performance contexts. Specifically, I examine the general comments on regional differences across the four student groups and analyze two of the interviews in fuller detail. I also investigate the role language plays in highlighting regional and other related identities in performance settings. The final part of the chapter revisits the concepts of the North and the South and discusses their interwoven relationship with language ideologies in Taiwan. Drawing data from Taiwanese society, this chapter seeks to shed light on the theoretical issues that sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologist are currently concerned with, such as structure and agency and the relationship between identity and language ideologies.

4.1 A Socio-Historical View of the Discourse of North/South Differences in Taiwan

4.1.1 Overview

In daily interaction and media reports and commentaries in Taiwan today, it is common to encounter a popular discourse on regional differences between the North (*bei bu*) and the South (*nan bu*) in Taiwan. Such a discourse touches upon issues as mundane as differences in culinary preferences, consumption behaviors, dressing styles, and language abilities and use, and as political as voting patterns, understandings of national identity, and stances toward Taiwan-China relationships.

However, popular as such a discourse is, the exact areas that the North and the South refer to are not always transparent. In scholarly as well as popular political discourses (e.g., Lee & Hsu, 2002), the Zhuo Shui River in central Taiwan is often marked as the dividing line of voters' different orientations toward competing political alliances. On other occasions, a distinction is made between northern, central, and southern Taiwan.[4] A more precise version of this distinction in scholarly research (e.g., Keng & Chen, 2003) often defines the North as the area north of Taichung city and county and the South as the area south of Yunlin county. Figure 2 in Chapter 2, a map of Taiwan, is repeated again in Figure 1a below. It divides Taiwan into northern, central, southern, and eastern Taiwan by color. A loose version of the 3-way distinction in popular discourse usually associates "the

North" with Taipei metropolitan area and the surrounding counties, "Central Taiwan" with Taichung City and the surrounding areas, and "the South" with Tainan, Kaohsiung, and the surrounding areas. Figure 1b shows the counties and major cities in Taiwan. Figure 1c indicates with an arrow the location of the Zhuo Shui River.

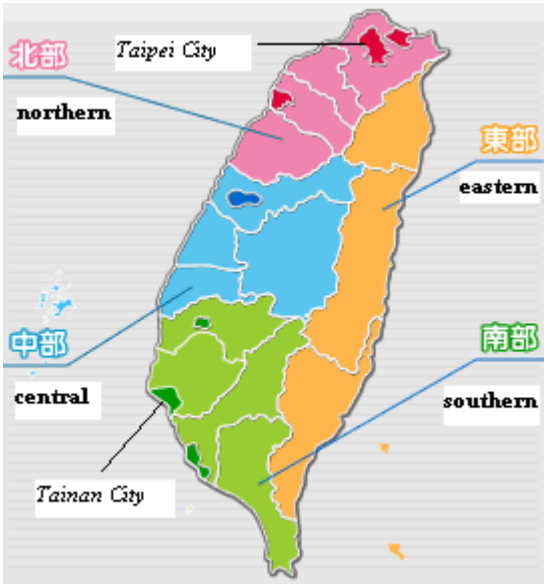

Figure 1a. A map of Taiwan with a 4-way regional division (Retrieved May 3, 2005 and adapted from http://www.silktour.com.tw/travel/index/taiwan_map.gif)

[4] The eastern region is less developed and is often left out of popular discourses.

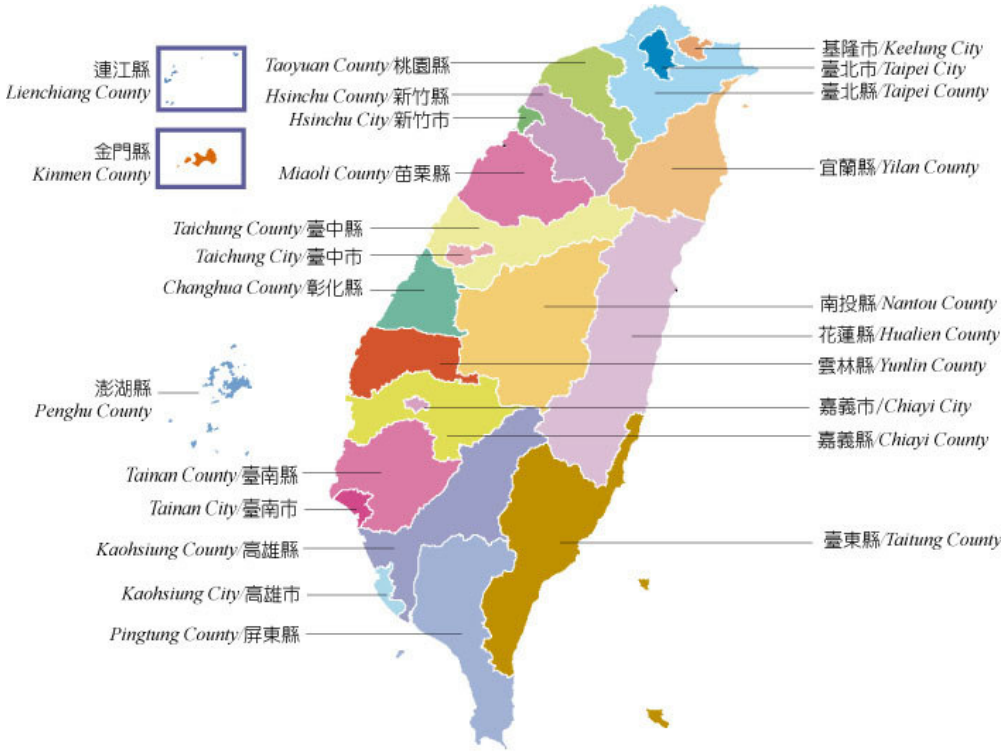

Figure 1b. A map of Taiwan (Retrieved May 3, 2005, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_divisions_of_the_Republic_of_China)

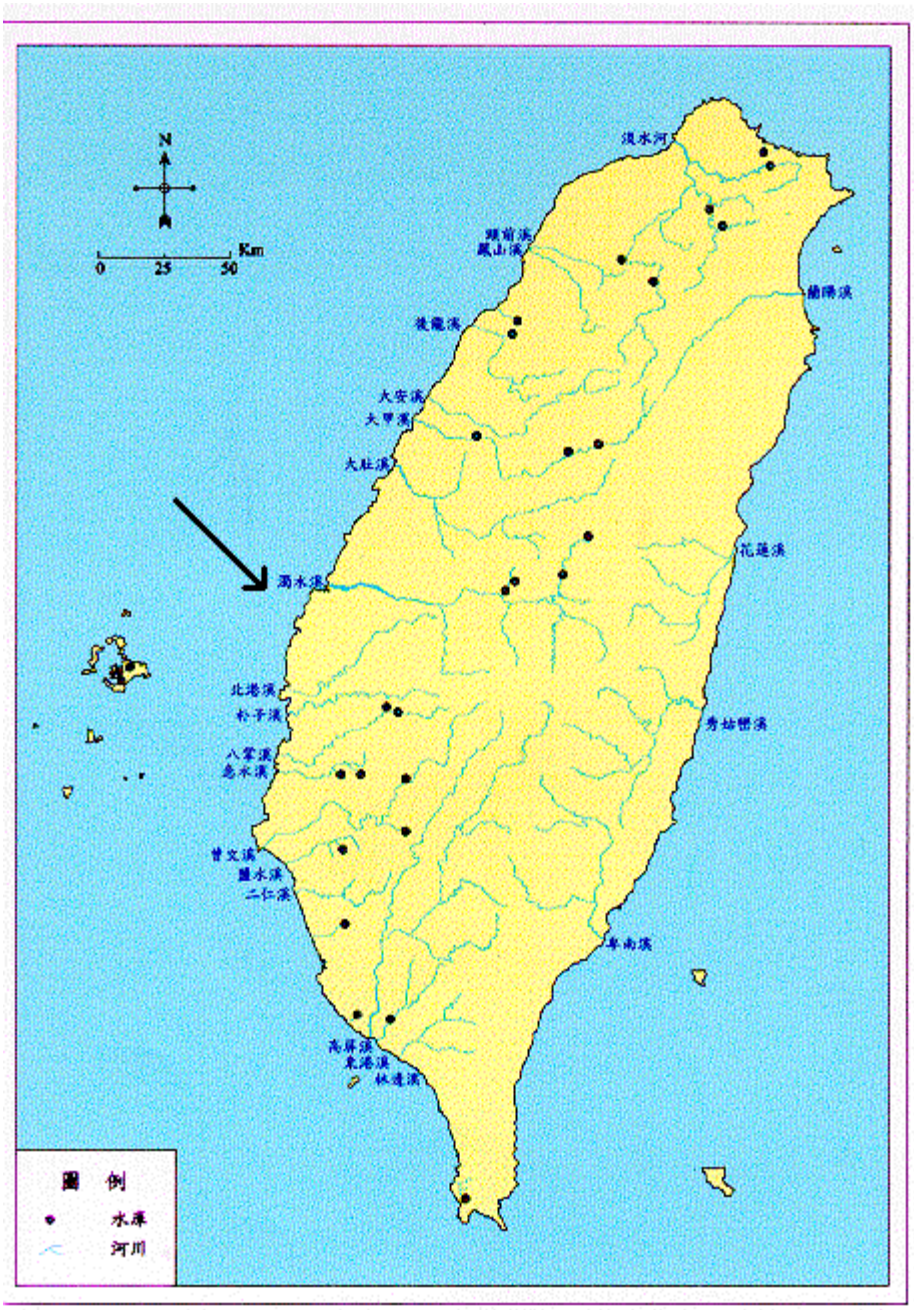

Figure 1c. A map of Taiwan and major rivers, with an arrow pointing to Zhuo Shui River (Retrieved May 3, 2005, and adapted from http://202.113.23.113/tw/image/11.gif)

Although the 3-way distinction is sometimes adopted in popular discourses, the 2-way dichotomy of North vs. South (or North vs. Central and South, *zhong nan bu*) is more frequently found. As I have pointed out, the specific geographic territories that the North and the South refer to can be quite unclear, and very often the comparison and contrast between Taipei metropolitan area and the rest of Taiwan and those between urban and rural areas are disguised under the discourses of North/South differences.

The difficulty in pinpointing the exact territories of the North and the South is not surprising, if we recognize the multiple layers of meaning in analyzing the concept of region. In his introduction to systematic regional geography, Nir (1990) distinguishes two different views of region in the discipline. Region is viewed by some as a mental construct or analytical tool and by others as realties that exist in space. Anthropologists hold a similar view. As Rodman (2003) points out, place can be recognized as "(1) an anthropological construct for 'setting' or the localization of concepts and as (2) socially constructed, spatialized experience" (p. 206). Although the two views are seemingly oppositional, they are not incompatible. As Low and Lawrence-Zuniga (2003) point out, the anthropological endeavor to the study of inscribed spaces focuses on "how people collectively form a meaningful relationship with the locales they occupy, how they attach meaning to space, or transform 'space' into 'place.'…The relationship between people and their surroundings entails more than attaching meaning to space, but involves the

recognition and cultural elaboration of perceived properties of environments in mutually constituting ways through narratives and praxis" (p.185).

The dual nature of the concept of region can also be observed in lay discourses on regional differences in Taiwan. On the one hand, there are observable material differences associated with regions in Taiwan. On the other hand, the contrast of the North and the South is constructed and, to a certain degree, imagined collectively through daily linguistic and non-linguistic practices and discourses circulating in Taiwanese society. In the following section, I examine the historical trajectory that leads to the perceived differences and how language, along with other characteristics, has come to be identified as representative of one region or another in Taiwan.

4.1.2 Historical Development

Geographically, Taiwan can be divided into two climates. The Zhuo Shui River roughly corresponds to the line of division: north of the river is a subtropical zone while the area to the south of the river is tropical. The climatic differences also result in different land development. As early as in the Japanese colonial period, there has been a saying *nan tang bei mi* "South Sugar North Rice," which refers to the different industrial crop of the two regions.

The popular discourse of North/South contrast can probably be traced back to the settlement history of Taiwan. By the 17th century, there had been a

considerable influx of settlers from the Chinese Mainland, most of whom gathered in the coastal area of southern Taiwan. In 1624, the Dutch East Indian Company invaded Taiwan, established its regime in today's Tainan City, and ruled Taiwan for 38 years until defeated by the Ming loyalist, Cheng Cheng-kung in 1662. Cheng established his base in today's Tainan City as well. The land development under Cheng's regime centered on today's Tainan, as well as part of today's Kaohsiung (Chen, 1997; Rubinstein, 1999). Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of settlements during this period, adopted from Chen (1997), p. 87. The rectangle in the southwestern part of Taiwan in the map corresponds to today's Tainan City.

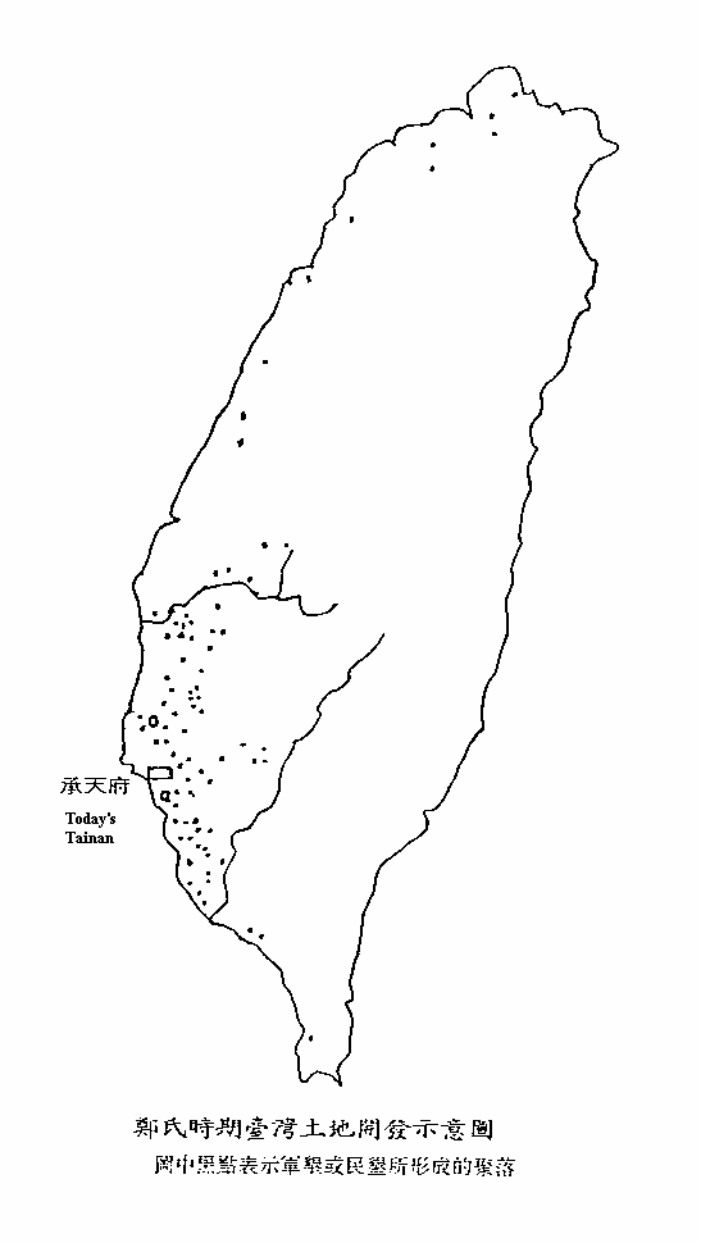

Figure 2. Distribution of Settlements during Cheng period (1661-1683). The rectangle in the southwestern part corresponds to today's Tainan City.

The early development of southern Taiwan renders this area its symbolic status as the birthplace of Han culture in Taiwan. Southern Taiwanese people today are generally proud of their cultural heritage, which manifests itself in the city government's promotion of Tainan City as the historic and cultural capital of Taiwan (Tainan City Government, 2003), as well as a popular perception of Kaohsiung as *cao gen* "grass-rooted" and characteristic of the "authentic" and local Taiwanese identity.

Unlike certain areas of southern Taiwan, which came into the scene of settlement history under the Dutch and Cheng regimes, the emergence of Taipei was a later development. In 1683, the Ching Empire took over Taiwan. The settlement gradually spread to the northern part of Taiwan. By mid-Ching, Mengjia (in today's Taipei) had become the third largest harbor and trading center in Taiwan.[5] By 1893, the Taipei area had exceeded the Tainan-Kaohsiung area in terms of the scale of import and export trading.

In 1895, the Ching Empire was defeated in the Sino-Japanese war and consequently ceded Taiwan to Japan. Taipei's political salience was highlighted when it was chosen as the capital under Japanese colonization. After the Second World War and the Chinese civil war against Chinese communists, the Chinese nationalist government retreated to Taiwan and designated Taipei as the country's

[5] A popular saying at that time, *yi fu er lu san mengjia*, indicates that Tainan in the south, Lugang in central Taiwan, and Mengjia in the north were three of the most prosperous harbors and trading centers.

political, economic, and cultural center. The largest city in the South, Kaohsiung, was positioned as a harbor city with heavy industry, while most of the South remained farmland.

The nationalist government has often been criticized for its unbalanced emphasis on regional development. Zeng (2000), in a commentary in a well-known Taiwanese magazine, illustrates the uneven distribution of various resources between Taipei metropolitan area, especially Taipei City, and the rest of Taiwan with central government's funding to city and county governments in 1999. Taipei City received 13.9 billion New Taiwanese Dollars (NT), while the second largest city in Taiwan, Kaohsiung City, was funded at only 8.3 billion. The largest and most well-funded county in Taiwan, Taipei County, was budgeted at only 1/10 the amount for Taipei City. The resources the other smaller counties received from the central government was an even smaller fraction than that received by Taipei City.

In a closer examination with these numbers, however, it seems that although the total funds Taipei City and Kaohsiung City received differ significantly, if we take into consideration the population of the two cities—Taipei approximately 2,632,000 and Kaohsiung approximately 1,509,000 in 2003—the financial resources each Taipei and Kaohsiung resident received from the central government approximated each other. However, such a perception that Taipei City receives the most attention and support from the KMT government remains prevalent, perhaps partly due to the salience of Taipei City under the earlier days of the KMT regime.

This perceived uneven distribution of resources generates among many southern Taiwanese a sense of resistance to and alienation from the KMT regime based in Taipei. The historical development of Taipei as a later settlement than their hometowns and as a capital of the Japanese and KMT regimes, both of which were sometimes considered colonizers, further increase the sense of metaphorical distance. As a result, the South came to be seen and promoted by political activists as a more "authentic" representative of local Taiwanese culture, in contrast to the Taipei metropolitan area, which carries the traces of foreign colonizers and international influences (cf. Luo, 2004).

The different distribution of resources and polices of regional development also result in differing labor market structure in the metropolitan Taipei area and the rest of the Taiwan and between the general areas of the North and the South. Different labor structures, in turn, may be linked to perceived differences in life styles. Table 1, adapted from Keng and Chen (2003) provides information on the economic structures of the three regions in western Taiwan and the larger cities within those regions.

TABLE 1. ECONOMIC STRUCTURES OF NORTH, CENTRAL, AND SOUTH TAIWAN IN 2001. (ADAPTED FROM KENG & CHEN, 2003)

Region	City	Service (%)	High Tech (%)	Agriculture (%)	Self-owned Business (%)
North	Taipei City	24.48	43.90	0.31	18.12
	North Average	14.65	25.34	4.00	18.14
Central	Taichung City	15.37	34.39	0.84	22.03
	Central Average	9.29	18.45	14.15	25.68
South	Tainan City	10.75	24.57	1.86	20.85
	Kaohsiung City	16.45	27.53	1.12	19.09
	South Average	10.87	20.27	10.70	22.91
Overall Average		11.69	21.04	9.85	22.09

As the data show, Taipei City has apparently the highest percentage of population involving in the service sector and high-tech industries and the smallest percentage participating in agriculture. If we compare across regions, northern Taiwan also leads in service sector and high-tech industries and falls behind in agriculture. Material differences in labor structure may surface in a variety of other aspects of life, such as differences in life styles, consumptions behaviors, and perhaps, more indirectly, in different degrees of profit from economic interactions

with China and consequently in political orientations and the meaning of a Taiwanese identity. For example, Keng and Chen (2003) argue that given its labor structure, northern Taiwan benefits most from cross-strait economic interactions and, as a result, tends to favor the KMT-PFP alliance, i.e., the "blueish parties," which supports deregulating trade with and investment in China. For a similar reason, southern Taiwan suffers more from such economic interactions and tends to support the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which manifests most clearly in the splitting voting patterns in northern and southern Taiwan in recent elections.

The above analysis illustrates how the settlement and colonial history, development policies, resistance to the governmental ideologies, and economic structures collectively contribute to the perceived contrast between the North and the South. Nevertheless, there is still another salient characteristic associated with regional contrast that is of central importance in this study but that has not been discussed so far: different patterns of language use.

It is often observed, both by my interviewees and the Taiwanese that I have casual conversations with, that Mandarin Chinese is the dominant language in the Taipei metropolitan area, especially in Taipei City. Members of younger generation with Southern Min heritage in Taipei are often Mandarin-dominant speakers and are unable to hold a fluent conversation in Taiwanese, their parents' native language. In contrast, in southern Taiwan, especially in smaller towns, Taiwanese remains the

language of daily life and family and community networks and is used widely in local institutional settings.

Such an observation captures a general tendency, but the relative difference in language use is by all means a matter of frequency rather than the exclusive use of one language or the other. However, the stereotypical linkage between language, region, and age often contributes to the collective construction of who the representative speakers of Mandarin and Taiwanese should be. While Taipei Mandarin is often recognized as equivalent to standard Taiwan Mandarin, i.e., Mandarin with no identifiable accent, dialectal differences in the Taiwanese spoken by younger Taipei-ans are often perceived as a matter of deficiency rather than difference, no matter how fluent their Taiwanese may be (see later analysis for details).

In the spirit of Bourdieu (1991), we may say that Taipei and the South represent different linguistic markets. One of the many reasons that contribute to the disparate formation of linguistic markets is the tradition of relative heterogeneity in ethnic makeup and language diversity in Taipei and the North in general, as well as, conversely, the relative homogeneity in the South (Lin, 1994). Prior to the massive immigration of Mainlanders in 1949, the Hakka population had been well established primarily in Taoyuan, Xinzhu, Miaoli, and all of which are counties located in northern Taiwan. Northern Taiwan at that time already showed greater ethnic and linguistic diversity than southern Taiwan, which was composed mainly

of people of the Southern Min group. The influx of Mainlanders in 1949 did not gather in any particular region, but scattered around urban areas all over the island. However, Taipei, being the largest city and the political center of Taiwan, absorbed the largest amount of the Mainlander population. Thus, immigration history, in part, helped create conditions under which disparate linguistic markets were formed.

The historical developments introduced in this section serve as the backdrop against which the perceived differences between the North and the South are formed. The social and cultural processes through which regions in Taiwan are rendered meaningful are extremely complex, and it is not my intention to exhaust the complexity with such a brief version of historical background. Rather, the information is provided to facilitate readers' understanding of the most salient perceived differences and the ways language participates in the popular discourses of regional contrast. In the next section, I investigate how contemporary media reports and commentaries contribute to and reinforce the prevalence of North/South contrast. Specifically, the investigation focuses on how the Taiwanese language is implicitly linked with non-linguistic characteristics often associated with southern Taiwanese in a print commentary that discusses differences in consumption behaviors between the northern and southern Taiwanese residents.

4.2 Discourses of North/South Differences in Media

Media plays an important role in the circulation and reshaping of perceived differences in the North and the South. During this research project, I casually observed 32 news reports and commentaries that referred to the North/South contrast. In Table 2, I provide examples of phrases used to describe regional differences in some of these commentaries. This table is meant to provide a glimpse into the most salient aspects of media discourses of the North/South contrast rather than to provide a comprehensive representation of the entirety of the perceived differences, a task doomed to fail given the complex, robust, and multiple nature of such discourses.

TABLE 2. SOME EXAMPLES OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF REGIONAL CONTRAST IN MEDIA COMMENTARIES

	North	South
Political Orientations	Blue	Green
Popular Campaign Slogans in 2004 elections	Peace & Anti-War	Love for Taiwan
Representation of Authentic Taiwanese spirit	The base of colonizers (Taipei)	The further south, the more authentic the Taiwanese spirit can be found
Media and News Style	Sophisticated	Lively, energetic, valiant
Arts		Concern for the land, original
	Urban, international	Rural, limited world views
Consumption behavior	Trendy; interested in high-tech products	Loyal to established local brands/relationships
Personality	Shrewd	Straightforward

Table 2 outlines some of the most discussed characteristics associated with the North and the South. In the remaining part of this section, I focus the investigation on a commentary entitled *Xiaofei pinwei nan bei da chayi: Xiang nan zou xiang bei zou* "Salient differences in consumption behaviors and tastes: Walking toward the South and the North," published in *Yuanjian* "Global View," a well-received financial management and technology magazine. Although language is not featured in the article's discussion on consumption behaviors, the contextual use of several Taiwanese phrases implicitly links language with the characteristics associated with southerners as analyzed in this article. This article is simply one among numerous examples of media commentaries that direct readers' attention to, reinforce, and shape the complexity of the meanings of regional differences. Through this ideological linkage between language and the social meanings that regions accrue over time, in certain contexts, language alone can be seen as carrying indexical meanings and interact with the discourses of regional differences in complex ways.

The article begins with the following paragraph, which is a fairly faithful summary of the authors' main arguments. The article is written in Mandarin Chinese, with occasional switching to stylized Taiwanese (see Chapter 6 for a discussion), which is underlined.

(1)

濁水溪，像是無法跨越的政治圖騰，分野出不同理念的南北選民。這道「天塹」也投影在許多消費市調中，分隔出不同品味的南北消費者。北部都會民眾愛嚐鮮、趕時髦、拿金錢換時間；南部以高雄爲代表的下港人，喜愛「俗擱大碗」、先「搏感情」再談生意、品牌有口碑就不亂換。

Zhuo Shui Xi, xiang shi wufa kuayue de zhengzhi tuteng, fenye chu butong linian de nan bei xuanmin. Zhe dao "tianqian" ye touying zai xuduo xiaofei shidiao zhong, fenge chu butong pinwei de nan bei xiaofeizhe. Beibu duhui minzhong ai changxian, gan shimao, na jinqian huan shijian; nanbu yi Kaohsiung wei dai biao de xia gang ren, xiai "su ge dawan", xian "bo ganqing" zai tan shengyi, pinpai you koubei jiu bu luan huan.

The Zhuo Shui River is like a political totem that cannot be crossed, dividing northern and southern voters with different beliefs. This "unbreakable natural boundary" also manifests itself in many surveys of consumption behaviors and divides the different tastes of northern and southern consumers. The northern urbanites love to explore the latest fashion and trend and value efficiency over money; southerners (literally, people of the lower harbors), represented by Kaohsiung, tend to favor products that are "cheap and large-sized," "take the time to forge a bond" before getting into a business discussion, and are loyal to established brands.

This opening paragraph clearly sets the tone for this article and provides a sketch of the major differences in consumption behaviors and personal traits associated with northerners and southerners that the article wishes to illustrate. Throughout the article, northerners are portrayed as urbanites who are sensitive to and accepting of new trends and technology, who are more likely to consume international brands and to shop in foreign-invested chain stores, and are more shrewd and efficient in both consumption and business settings, while southerners are depicted as locals who are straightforward and loyal to established local brands and relationships, who care about the value of a product more than its novelty and trendiness, but can also be irrationally lavish in the pursuit of high-end products.

The authors support their arguments with a number of statistical surveys, anecdotes, and scholarly quotations. However, these portraits still very much coincide with and, to a certain degree, reinforce the stereotypical images of northerners and southerners. The contrastive images in this article are produced not only through what is said about the two groups, i.e., the referential meanings of the text in those portraits, but also through how it is said, i.e., the author's language choice in the description of the characteristics of the two groups.

The article is written in standard Mandarin, with a few lexical borrowings from Taiwanese. If we take the opening paragraph for example, there are three Taiwanese phrases, *xia gang ren* (meant to be read with the Taiwanese pronunciation *e kang lang*) "people of lower harbors/southerners," *su ge dawan*

(siok ko toa oaN) "cheap and large-sized," *bo ganqing (poa kamching)* "forging a bond," all of which appear in the last sentence and are used to describe southerners.[6] The last two phrases are colloquial idioms frequently used to create a sense of localness in both spoken and written contexts and are often associated with characteristics such as straightforwardness and unculturedness, and for *bo ganqing*, masculinity as well. The term *xia gang ren* "people of lower harbors/southerners" is traditionally used by northerners and takes a north-centered point of view. The referential content of the term as well as the switch from standard written Mandarin to stylized Taiwanese (see Chapter 6 for more discussions of such usages) in this particular context draws a distinction between the "us" and the "other": "us" as the cosmopolitan, sophisticated urbanites in the North; "other" as the Taiwanese-speaking, bold, generous, but simple-minded locals in the South.

While the incorporation of these Taiwanese terms (and consequently the social meanings associated with both the language and these particular terms) helps to "spice up" the contrastive images of southerners that the authors wish to construct, the association of the Taiwanese language with the stereotypical characteristics of southerners, in turn, reinforces and reproduces the ideological linkage between language and the non-linguistic portraits of regional differences. It is through such mutually constitutive interactions in the discourses one encounters

[6] The Italics represent the Romanization of Mandarin, the dominant written code, while the underlined Romanized forms in the parentheses indicate how these phrases are meant to read: in their Taiwanese pronunciation.

in daily life, be it media commentaries or conversational interactions, that regions and languages are rendered socially meaningful and that their meanings are constantly reproduced, contested, and shaped.

Given that most of the Taiwanese media are based in Taipei metropolitan area (which is itself a result of unbalanced regional development caused by a variety of connected historical, political, and cultural reasons), it is not surprising that media commentaries or even scholarly discussions on region-related issues often take a Taipei-centered point of view. Resistance to such a viewpoint by Southerners may have existed for a long time and, as mentioned earlier, may have contributed to southern activists' arguments about the symbolic status of the South and the Taiwanese language as representative of an authentic Taiwanese-ness. The recent political transition from a KMT-centered regime to the DPP's historical successes in the past two presidential elections and the differential support in the North and the South toward the two political alliances further increase the general public's regional awareness and, to a certain degree, polarize perceived regional differences. While some political analysts argue that regional differences are exaggerated by the DPP to emphasize their representation of the South and the "true," local Taiwanese (Xia, 2003), others maintain that the seemingly newly emergent awareness of regional difference is a resurfacing of a long existing struggle about the definition of Taiwanese-ness. During my fieldwork between 2002 and 2004, I encountered variations of the terms equivalent to "Taipei Chauvinism" such as *taibei shawen*

zhuyi, literally, "Taipei chauvinism," and *da taibei zhuyi*, literally, "big Taipei-ism" several times in interviews and online discussion forums, an indication of the existence of an articulated resistance to the long-established Taipei-centered point of view. The increasing salience of such a discourse, the growing political power of the DPP, and the DPP's policies of Taiwanization and its effort to develop the South also increase Taipei-ans awareness of regional difference and, to a certain degree, threaten their sense of being.

As is shown in this magazine article and in many popular discourses, a convenient equation of metropolitan Taipei with the North, on the one hand, and rural towns with the South, on the other, often blurs the distinction between the North and the South as physical spaces and as social constructs. Dichotomous characteristics at various levels are mapped onto the two loosely defined regions and are bound together through their linkages to one particular region. While patterns of language use and linguistic styles participate in this meaning-making process, in turn, language use alone comes to index particular social meanings, such as cosmopolitan, sophisticated, docile, crafty, and white-collar, on the one hand, and authentic, local, straightforward, undaunted, enthusiastic, blue-collar, and pro-Taiwan-independence, on the other.

Given the social context, how do the participants in my study, who are college students from Taipei and Tainan, position themselves and react to the dominant ideologies of language and region? How do they construct their multiple

identities as Taipei-ans and Tainanites, educated college students, and members of the student organizations that they belong to, in semi-structured interviews and in performance settings? These are the investigations that I turn to in the remaining part of the chapter.

4.3 The Construction of Regional Differences in Interviews

4.3.1 General Trends

In this section, I examine my interviewees' reports on regional differences, language use, and their interrelationships. The analysis begins with an overview of the reports given by all the 44 interviewees, with an emphasis on what is shared and not shared across the four groups and then proceeds with case studies of two interviews.

In each interview, the interviewee was asked if there is any noticeable difference in any aspects between their fellow classmates from different regions in Taiwan or, conversely, if individual differences account for the majority of interpersonal variation on campus. Another related question was whether their hometowns possess any characteristics that set them apart from other cities or regions in Taiwan. The first question is modified slightly according to the student organizations the interviewee belongs to. The Tainan students at NTU (Taipei) and the Taipei students at NCKU (Tainan), who attend universities in places other than their hometowns, were asked to compare personal traits or regional characteristics

associated with Taipei and Tainan. For the Taipei students at NTU, most of whom have lived in the Taipei metropolitan area all their life, a more general comparison of Taipei and other regions in Taiwan was requested. The Tainan students at NCKU were also asked to compare Taipei and Taiwan, given that all of them are familiar with Taipei to a certain degree: most of them have visited the city before and have regular interactions with classmates from Taipei.

The two open-ended questions elicited a variety of answers. Three of the interviewees commented that individuality is a better explanation of difference, yet still provided generalizations of regional characteristics. The rest of the interviewees, on the other hand, were ready to give either short or elaborated comments. Table 3 summarizes the answers across the four groups. The numbers in the table indicate numbers of students commenting on each topic. Descriptions of regional characteristics or personal traits mentioned by all the four groups are highlighted in light yellow on the top section of the table; those mentioned by three groups are presented in the middle section in light blue; those mentioned by two groups a total of more than 5 times are displayed in the bottom section highlighted in light purple.[7]

[7] The decision to exclude from this table the characteristics mentioned less than 5 times is not random. There is a gap in number of occurrence between 3 and 5. That is, all the excluded responses occurred in the interviews no more than three times.

TABLE 3. SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW REPORTS ACROSS 4 STUDENT GROUPS

NTU = National Taiwan University (Taipei)

NCKU = National Cheng Kung University (Tainan)

TN = Tainan Student Association

JB = Jian-Bei Alumni (from Taipei)

	NTU TN	NTU JB	NCKU TN	NCKU JB	Total
Fashion styles	3	4	6	8	21
Personality: warm vs. cold	5	1	5	4	15
Mandarin accents	2	2	3	4	11
Frequency in the use of M & T	1	1	4	4	10
Consumption ability and behaviors	2	3	1	3	9
Regional cuisine	8		5	3	16
Pace, efficiency	6		3	3	12
Public transportation, convenience	1	6		3	10
Aggressiveness in self-presentation	1		4	4	9
Political orientation	3		2	2	7
Personality: straightforward vs. shrewd & indirect	3	3		1	7
Participation in cultural events	2	3		1	6
Crowdedness and development	1	2		3	6
Foreign language proficiency	1		1	2	4
Tainan--historical city	6		8		14
Qizhi--refinedness and culturedness		4		2	6
life style (leisure activities)			4	2	6

Figure 3 includes the same data but display them in a slightly different way. Instead of arranging the data in terms of number of occurrence, figure 4.1 groups similar characteristics and presents them adjacently. For example, interviewees' comments on language use, including the relative frequency of Mandarin and

Taiwanese, Mandarin accents, and foreign language proficiency are placed on the top, followed by fashion styles and consumption behaviors, etc.

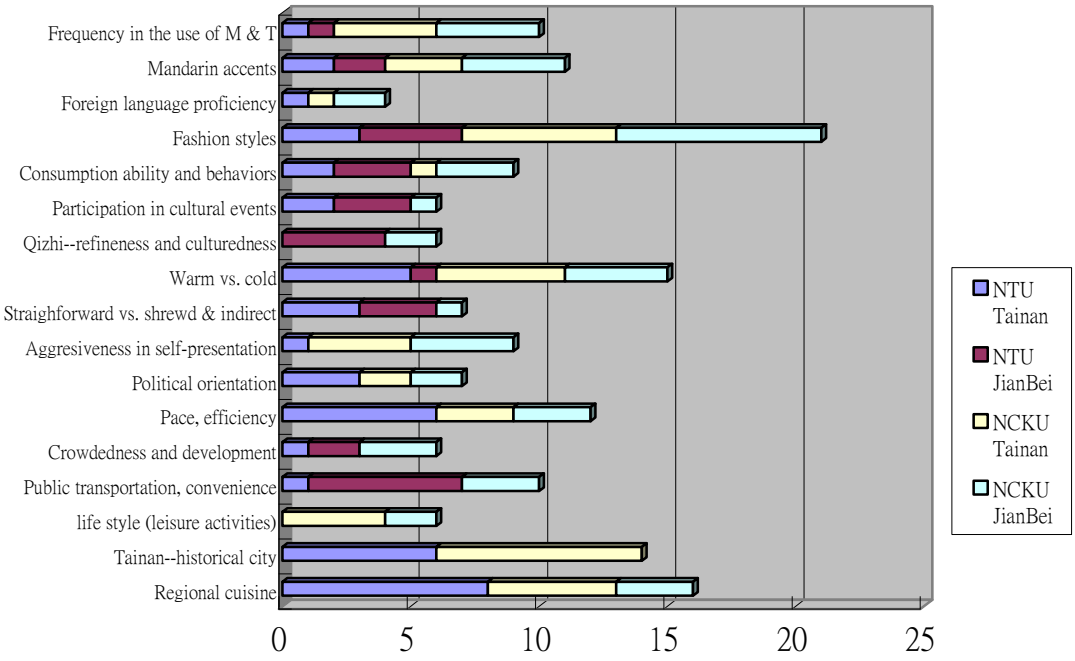

Figure 3. Summary of interview reports across 4 student groups

As the data show, the most frequently commented on characteristics tightly correspond to those circulating in the media as discussed in previous section. Differences in language use, including the relative frequency of Mandarin and Taiwanese, Mandarin accents, and foreign language proficiency, are among the

most salient regional characteristics identified by my interviewees. Such comments echoed the interviewees' own responses to a question in another part of the interview that addresses the stereotypical or typical images associated with Mandarin, Taiwanese, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, standard Mandarin, and English as well as other foreign languages. While the concept of region was neither explicitly nor implicitly featured in the question, links between Taipei-ans, standard Mandarin, broken Taiwanese, and English proficiency, on the one hand, and between southerners (or Tainanites, especially those who are elder), Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, and fluent Taiwanese, on the other hand, often surfaced in the interviewees' response to the question. Such bi-directional correspondences in responses to questions that do not intend to explicitly elicit the connection between region and language seem to indicate that such a linkage is psychologically real.

One may wish to argue that even though the questions in the interviews do not explicitly encourage interviewees to make the connection between language and region, the nature of the interviews as one centered mostly on linguistic issues and the fact that the venue of participant recruitment is student organizations that highlight regionality may invoke a higher degree of awareness of the link between region and language. While I agree on the possible influence of the interview context on interviewees' responses, such an influence by no means makes the responses less "faithful" or meaningful. Any individual's identity and stances toward a particular issue, in this case, the relationships between language and region

in the Taiwanese context, are fluid and constantly being constituted in daily interactions. It is exactly in such a context, where language and region are more or less at issue, that we are allowed to investigate how their connection is constructed in each interactional moment and how the interviewees position themselves in relation to multiple levels of ideologies of language, region, educatedness, class, and Taiwanese-ness.

In addition to the characteristics mentioned by all four groups, there are also characteristics salient to some groups, but not so much to others. In Table 3, the middle section lists the characteristics mentioned by three of the four groups. The group that made no reference to these characteristics is either the Taipei students at NTU or Tainan students at NCKU: both groups attended universities in their hometowns. In other words, the other two groups articulated regional differences to a greater extent, perhaps due to their relocation and contact with a new environment, an indication that the perception of a shared identity often requires a sense of an Other against which can be positioned those who are socially constructed as being the same (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004a).

If we examine the data by the interviewees' regional background, interesting patterns emerge from the answers. Figure 4 presents the same data but regroups the interviewees into only two groups, Tainan and Jian-Bei alumni across universities attended. As shown in the figure, *qizhi*, literally "temperament/disposition," was mentioned six times by Jian-Bei students but did not occur in any of the interviews

of Tainan students. The emphasis of Tainan as a historic city was only mentioned by Tainan students as well.

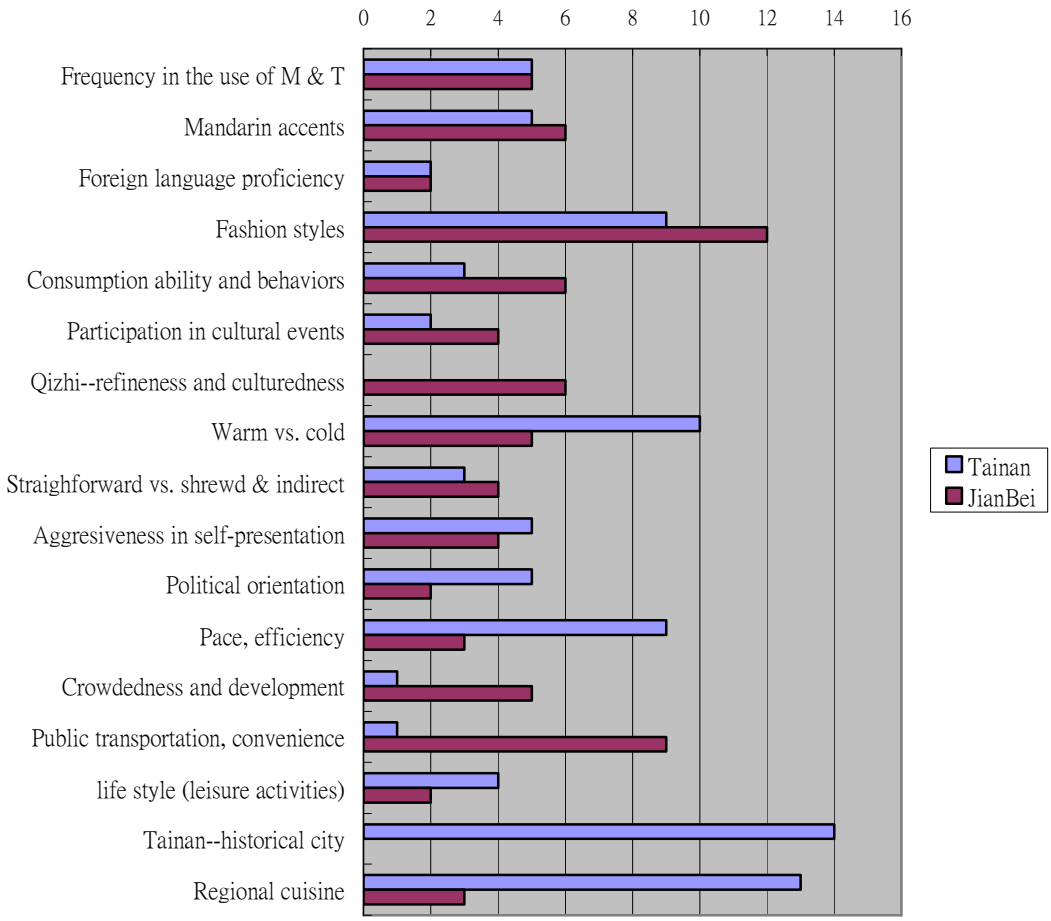

Figure 4. Summary of interview reports, grouped based on interviewees' regional backgrounds

The occurrence of the term *qizhi* is particularly interesting. It occurred in contexts such as *nan bu bei bu xuesheng qizhi bu yiyang* "students from the North and the South have different *qizhi*," and *Jian Bei xuesheng qizhi bijiao hao* "Jian Bei students have better *qizhi.*" The term *qizhi* implies a sense of refinement and culturedness and is more frequently used by Taiwanese to refer to the disposition of a female, although its use is not gender exclusive.

While it is probably difficult to pinpoint exactly what *qizhi* refers to, the following excerpt from an interview with Ikuya, a Taipei student studying at NCKU, Tainan, may shed some light on the meaning and the attitudes associated with it. When asked whether there is any characteristic difference between fellow Jian Bei students, or more generally, Taipei students and other students at NCKU, Ikuya gave his answer. The word *qizhi* and its rough equivalent in the translation are highlighted in bold.

(2)

*Ikuya: kan qilai jiu, jianghua bijiao **qizhi** yidian de ganjue. Ranhou zenyang, fan zheng yinggai fen de chulai la.*

It seems that the way (we, i.e., those of us from Taipei) talk is more **refined**. And--uh, anyway, one should be able to tell.

HY: bijiao zenyang?

More what?

Ikuya: zixi guancha yinggai fen de chulai

If you pay close attention, you should be able to see the differences.

HY: hmm-hmm.

Hmm-hmm

Ikuya: Nan bu ren haishi bijiao song yidian.

Southerners are, after all, not as sophisticated.

HY: hmm-hmm

Hmm-hmm

Ikuya: (laugh and look around). Buyao bei bieren tingdao.

(laugh and look around) I hope other people didn't hear it.

……..

HY: Ni juede shi jianbei hui you cha, hai shi shuo jiushi taibei ren.

Do you mean Jian-Bei alumni, or Taipei-ans in general talk differently (from southerners)?

Ikuya: wo shi juede dou you cha.

I think both talk differently (from southerners).

……..

*HY: ni shuo jianghua bijiao you **qizhi** zhi de shi neirong haishi=*

When you say that the way they talk is more **refined**, do you refer to the content or=

Ikuya: = ye buzhi shi jianghua, jiushi zheng ge gei renjia de ganjue.

=It's not just about the way (we/they) talk. It's about the general impressions (we/they) give to people.

In this excerpt, a clear distinction between Taipei-ans and southerners is drawn, with an emphasis on *qizhi* and the different ways of speaking between the two groups. While Ikuya did not specify what he meant when he suggested that Taipei-ans talk in a more refined way in this excerpt, a short while later in the interview upon my request, he gave an example of the differences that he perceived between Taipei-ans (such as himself) and southerners (such as his roommate from Tainan).

(3)

Ikuya: piru shuo, ah, kandao yijian xiaoxi, women de fanying jiuhui bijiao zhengchang yidian, bu hui tai kuazhang.

For example, when we hear about things, our reaction is generally more normal. We wouldn't be too dramatic.

HY: hmm-hmm

Hmm-hmm.

Ikuya: Danshi wo nage tainan shiyou jiuhui hen kuazhang. Ranhou taiyu jiuhui kaishi chulai. (imitate the intonation with nonsense sound sequence)

But my Tainan roommate would get very dramatic. Then his Taiwanese slips out. (imitate the intonation with nonsense syllables)

HY: hmm-hmm.

Hmm-hmm.

Ikuya: Ranhou na ge shi zanghua. Zhe yang ni dagai zhidao le. (Laugh).

And these are swear words. You know what I mean, right? (laugh)

In this excerpt, Ikuya articulated the relationship between *qizhi*, regional characteristics, a poised disposition vis-à-vis an easily agitated temperament, the Taiwanese language, and swear words. While the literal meaning of *qizhi* was not directly connected with language use, his elaboration reveals the ideological working that links social groupings (e.g., Taipei-ans vs. Tainanites), culturedness and refinement, language use, and swearing together and their mutually constitutive relationship; it illustrates the complexity involved in rendering a language or a social group meaningful. A fuller analysis on *qizhi* in conjunction with gender and language use is provided in next chapter. For the purpose of current discussion, it is interesting to note that six out of twenty-two interviewees from Taipei spontaneously use the term in their comments on regional differences, which is a sharp contrast with its non-occurrence among interviewees from Tainan.

Ikuya's comments may strike us as blunt, but he appeared to be aware of his own bluntness when he laughed and said that hopefully no one around heard the conversation, which took place in Tainan. What is happening in the excerpt is an on-going construction of distinctions. My role as a fellow Taipei-an enabled Ikuya to establish a "Taipei identity" based on the similarities between us, those from Taipei, and the differences between us and the Other in the interview context. In many ways, Ikuya perhaps shared more similarities with his Tainan roommate than with

an interviewer who was noticeably older and led a very different life. However, in this particular moment of interaction, these differences ceased to be important in the construction of the most relevant identity frame. (cf. Bucholtz & Hall, 2004a)

4.3.2 Case Studies—The Construction of Regional Identities in Two Interviews

The previous sections of the chapter discuss the discourses of South/North contrast in media and present the interviewees' general comments on regional differences. Such a discussion provides an overview of the generalizations circulating in the society at large and among the college students that I worked with and serves as a backdrop against which individual constructions of identity and difference in each interactional moment can be examined. In the remaining part of the chapter, I investigate on a more local level how regional differences are constructed discursively and linguistically in interview and performance contexts. I begin with case studies of two interviews. The two interviews examined below are not intended as representatives of all the participants or the whole population of Taiwanese college students. Rather, the analysis focuses on the dynamic nature of identity construction and how ideologies about language and region are constantly contested and reshaped in on-going interaction during the interviews.

THE CASE OF YJ, A FEMALE NCKU STUDENT FROM TAIPEI

YJ was a twenty-three-year-old female student majoring in medicine at NCKU. She grew up in Taipei and moved to Tainan after high school when she was admitted to the medical school of NCKU, a program one enters immediately after high school. At the time the interview was conducted, she had been in Tainan for five years and was an intern at NCKU's medical center. She was also a former president of Jian-Bei student association.

The predominant language in the interview was Mandarin, with YJ occasionally code-switching to English vocabulary. She spoke Mandarin in a very standard manner, both in terms of phonological features and lexical choices. In the interview, when asked to provide her impressions of Tainan and Taipei, she clearly articulated her strong identification with Taipei and provided a number of observations on differences between the two cities as well as those between the cities' residents.

TAIPEI AND TAINAN: THE CITIES

The following excerpt illustrates YJ's impressions of the two cities.

(4)

HY: ni juede ni zai gang shang daxue de shihou you mei you shou dao shenmeyang de chongji, dui ge ge quyu=

Did you encounter any impact when you first entered college, with regard to region=

YJ: you a. wo hui juede, you yi zhong, xiangjiang cong Taibei dao Tainan, xian bu lun gen qita tongxue de guanxi. Wo juede wo dao Tainan de shihou, wo jiu juede, hem (sigh), wo bei xiafang le (laugh).

=Yes. I felt, some kind of, let me talk about my feelings when I moved to Tainan, my relationship with my classmates aside for now. When I came to Tainan, I felt, (sigh), I had been relegated/banished (laugh).

HY: (laugh)

YJ: gang kaishi wo dou you zhe zhong ganjue. (laugh) danshi ni bu keyi biaoshi chulai.

When I first came here I always felt that. (laugh) But you are not supposed to show.

HY: Hmm-hmm

YJ: Jiushi, buran bieren hui juede, heng, nimen zhexie Taibei ren, jiu zhi hui yiwei nimen Taibei hao. Jiushi, wo yijing xiangshou dao ta bianli de yangzi le.

That is, otherwise people will think, (a grunt of disapproval), you Taipei people always think Taipei is better. That is, I have experienced how convenient it is to live there (in Taipei).

HY: Hmm-hmm.

YJ: Jiu shi, wo juede wo haishi bijiao xihuan, jiushi, hen bianli de shenghuo. Ranhou wo xiang yao ganma ma, jiushi hen fangbian.

That is, I think I still like a convenient life style better. I can do whatever I'd like to do.

HY: mm.

YJ: Jintian xiang kan dianying, huoshi xiang yao qu, en, nali zhao ge shu a, huoshi kan ge shenme biaoyan. Jiushi meitian jihu dou you butong de, zheyang de shiwu. Na wo keneng da ge jieyun, da ge gongche, dabuliao jiao wo ba kaiche, jiushi hen rongyi jiu keyi daoda. Na keshi dao le Tainan yihou, ta de gongzhong jiaotong gongju bu shi hen fangbian. Ranhou, erjie wo juede ta shi yi ge budiao feichang huanman de, de chengshi.

Today I might want to go to see a movie, to find a book somewhere, or to see a performance of some kind. Activities like these are happening everyday. I can take the MRT, the bus, or the worst is to ask my Dad to drive me there. It is always easy to get wherever you want to go. But in Tainan, public transportation is not convenient. And, I think, it is a city of a very slow pace.

In this excerpt, YJ articulates her strong identification with Taipei and makes an analogy of her moving to Tainan as relegation in the very beginning, which creates a sharp contrast between her views of the two cities and sets the tone for the

following conversation. The imaginary quotation "You Taipei people always think Taipei is better," immediately elicits a distinction between YJ (as well as the interviewer, myself) as a Taipei-an and the Other. Throughout the excerpt, Taipei is portrayed as a city with easy access to various cultural activities, both in terms of the physical aspect, i.e., the convenient public transportation, and the range of available cultural resources and opportunities.

In her response to another question, YJ again described Taipei as a city with energy and diversity. Code-switching to English is highlighted in bold.

(5)

HY: na ni juede Taibei zhe ge defang zui da de tese shi shenme? Ni juede gen ni qita dai guo de difang xiangbi qilai de hua, zhe ge difang zhe ge chengshi bijiao da de tese shi shenme=

What do you think are the most distinctive characteristics of Taipei? In comparison to other places that you've been to, what's different about this place, this city?

YJ: =Mm, hen mang luan (laugh)

=Mm, busy and chaotic (laugh)

HY: (laugh)

YJ: Jiushi, mei ge ren dou congcongmangmang de=

That is, everyone's in a hurry.

HY: =Hmm.

YJ: Dui. Ranhou, hen you jingzheng de ganjue, zhishao gen Taiwan qita chengshi biqilai. Ranhou, en, feichang bianjie.

Right. And, you can feel the competitive spirit, at least in comparison to other cities in Taiwan. And, hmm, very convenient.

HY: hmm.

YJ: bu zhi shi xiaotong shang de. Keneng moutian wo turan xiangdao xiang chi yindu cai, na ni jiu suibian keyi zhaodao hen duo jia yindu cai canting.

Not only in terms of transportation. Suppose one day I feel like having some Indian food, I can easily find many Indian restaurants.

HY: hmm-hmm.

YJ: Ranhou, ni xiang yao chi taiguo cai, jiu keyi zhao dao taiguo canting. Jiu shi ni bijiao rongyi zhaodao yixie buyiyang de dongxi. Jiu shi ta de ***diversity*** *bijiao da.*

And, if you'd like to have Thai food, you can find Thai restaurants. That is, it is easier to find different things. There is more **diversity**.

In these excerpts, Taipei is portrayed as a modern, competitive, international city with various cultural activities. YJ's switch from Mandarin to the English word "diversity" may not be an accident. The status of English as the most recognized

international lingua franca links the use of English to a sense of cosmopolitaness, a characteristic that seems to underline YJ's portrait of the distinctiveness of Taipei.

While these excerpts involve the discussion on the characteristics of the two cities, it is important, however, to recognize that a place only develops and receives its meaning through the eyes (and ears) of the beholder. As Low and Lawrence-Zuniga (2003) points out, a geographic locale is simply a physical space until people attach meanings to space, and thereby transform space into place. The relationship between people and their surroundings encompasses both the meaning-attaching process and "the recognition and cultural elaboration of perceived properties of environments in mutually constituting ways through narratives and praxis" (p. 14).

Therefore, in these excerpts, YJ not only reports the contrast she perceives between the two cities, but also displays her identification with Taipei and constructs her identity as a Taipei-an, a participant of cultural events, and a consumer of international cuisine, etc., through her comments on the two places. While Taipei acquires its social meanings through YJ's portraits of the city, YJ's self-presentation also interacts with and is shaped by the experience and memories associated with the place.

The comment on Taipei's diversity takes another form when she discusses the different personality traits of fellow students from Taipei and the South,

articulated as acceptance of new technology and concepts and tolerance of differences, which is discussed in the next section.

TAIPEI AND TAINAN/SOUTH: THE PEOPLE

In the next excerpt, YJ is asked whether she perceives any difference between fellow students in Jian-Bei Student Association and other students at the university. She responds with a number of her observations. Code-switching to English is again marked in bold.

(6)

YJ: wo juede you yixie buyiyang. Dui.

I think there are some differences. Right.

HY: Hmm-hmm.

YJ: Nazhong bu yiyang, ei, wo youshihou zai xiang, bu xiaode shi hao haishi bu hao.

The difference, uh, sometimes I think, I don't know if it is good or bad.

HY: Mm.

YJ: Yinwei yiqian, wo keneng bu hui name juede. Danshi haoxiang gao nianji, dagai san si nianji zhi hou, youshihou hui juede, youshihou tongxue jiuhui kaiwanxiao shuo, a, nimen zhe xie Taibei ren.

Because in the past, I probably didn't feel that way. But more recently, probably since I became a junior or senior, sometimes I feel, sometimes my classmates would jokingly say, ah, you Taipei people.

HY: Hmm-hmm.

YJ: Nazhong ganjue, xiangshi yi zhong, mm--, ***discrimination.***

It feels like, like a kind of, mm--, **discrimination.**

HY: Hmm-hmm.

YJ: Nazhong ganjue, ta bu shi chengzan ni, huozhe zhi shi shuo, a, ni zhege zhu Tainan de, ni zhe ge zhu Taibei de. Ershi, you yizhong bei tebie quge de yiwei. Wo juede women you yixie tezhi shi bu tai yiyang de.

It is not a compliment. They are not simply categorizing those of you who live in Tainan and those of you who live in Taipei. Instead, we are specifically singled out. I think we do show some differences in terms of personality.

HY: Mm.

YJ: Yinwei dajia, dabufen ren shi cong xiao shi zai Taibei zhangda. Ranhou yijing hen xiguan nali de bianli de shenghuo.

Because we, most of us grew up in Taipei. We are very used to the convenience there.

HY: Mm.

YJ: Ranhou (.) Daban shang a, xiangfa shang, wo juede dou bu tai yiyang.

And-uh (.) The way we dress, the way we think, there are differences.

YJ then continues to elaborate on the perceived differences, that Taipei students tend to have a clearer plan for career development, tend to dress more appropriately, and tend to be more accepting of new technology.

In this excerpt, YJ illustrates the salience of the category "Taipei-an" both from her own point of view and the perspectives of her southern classmates. While her southern classmates single her out by playfully labeling her as a member of the Other, *nimen zhexie Taibei ren* "you Taipei people," YJ herself acknowledges that she perceives noticeable differences between Taipei and southern students. Her switch from Mandarin to the English noun "discrimination" when describing such a label seems to have its discursive effect as well. While the intention of her switch is beyond our grasp, such a switch from the more unmarked language to a more marked one (and one that is often associated with cosmopolitanism) at least creates a rhetorical effect that highlights her narrated experience as an Other.

Differential language use also featured in the discussion of regional contrast. Differences in relative frequency of language choice and dialectal differences in Mandarin and Taiwanese were commented on by YJ. In accordance with the popular views and the general comments made by many interviewees mentioned in previous sections, she reported that Taiwanese was used more frequently in Tainan, that Tainan residents were more likely to have a Taiwanese accent in their

Mandarin, and Taipei students tended to speak Taiwanese less fluently. The latter has become such a well-established stereotype in Taiwan that YJ, a relatively competent Taiwanese speaker in comparison to most of her Taipei peers, displayed her frustration that her Taiwanese pronunciation is often corrected by her southern classmates when she perceives the differences as a matter of dialectal variation rather than deficiency.

YJ's comment on Taipei as a city with diversity in the previous section is closely tied to what she perceived as the major personality characteristics that Taipei-ans as a group tended to share. In the next excerpt, in response to the last question in the interview, YJ brought together the characteristics that bind the city and the people: diversity and tolerance vs. homogeneity and intolerance.

(7)

HY: ni juede shenwei Taibe ren shi bu shi yi jian zhide zihao de shiqing?

Do you think that being a Taipei-an is something to be proud of?

YJ: wo juede shi, danshi wo bu keyi biaoxian chulai.

I think so, but I am not supposed to show that.

HY: (laugh)

YJ: (laigh). Yinwen tamen, tongxue hui juede (.) bu zhidao ye, wo juede mei ge difang you mei ge difang de hao, danshi, jiushi (.) wo hui juede hen bucuo shi yinwei, en, ni jianguo de youqu de shiqing=

Because my classmates, they will think (.) I don't know. I think every place has its own charm, but, (.) I like Taipei because, hmm, you have a chance to see more interesting things.

HY:=Hmm

YJ: huoshi bijiao xinying de shiwu a, huoshi na zhong duiyu jingzheng de ganjue, jiushi bu tai [yiyang

Or new things, or to feel a sense of competitiveness, it is different.

HY: [heN.

[Hmm.

YJ: Gen changqi shenghuo zai yi ge guding quyu de ren bu tai yiyang. Suoyi biancheng shuo, ruguo ni kanguo bijiao duo butong de yijian, huoshi butong xiangfa de ren tongshi chu xian zai yi ge difang de hua, wo juede ni dui butong de shiwu de jienadu, huoshi baorong du hui bijiao gao

We are different from those who live in one confined place most of their lives. That is to say, if you've seen diverse opinions, or people with different perspectives in the same place, I think you will be more accepting of or more tolerant of different things.

HY: Hmm-hmm.

YJ: Na qita xiang jiao yu wo yixie tongxue, ta keneng, jiuxiang, wo jiu meiyou juede ta jiang Taiwan guoyu you shenme buhao. Wo shi bu xihuan, danshi wo meiyou juede bu hao a. Na wo ye meiyou tebie juede ni de taiyu jiang

nayangzi zenmeyang. Danshi ni weishenme yiding yao juede wo jiang de taiyu shi cuo de ne?

In contrast to some of my classmates, they might, for example, I don't feel that there is anything wrong that they speak Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. I don't like it, but I don't feel that there's anything wrong about it. And I have no problem with your Taiwanese, but why do you have to think that my Taiwanese is incorrect?

In this excerpt, YJ, to a certain degree, summarizes her comments on regional differences and articulates the relationship between Taipei city's diversity and Taipei-an's acceptance to heterogeneity, on the one hand, the Tainan's (or South's) relative homogeneity and southerners' lack of awareness of differences, on the other. Through such discursive practices in the interview, she aligns herself with characteristics associated with Taipei and highlights the distinction between the Taipei-an as an ingroup and the southerners as an outgroup.

As the above illustrations shows, while there are a number of regional differences identified by YJ, language is among one of the most salient aspects that characterize YJ's discursive construction of regional contrast. With her strong identification with Taipei and awareness of regional difference, does her actual language use display any Taipei-related features or a lack of South-related

characteristics? In other words, is there any correlation between levels of discursive consciousness of regional differences and linguistic practices?

YJ provided an anecdote about herself that hints at the answer to this question. After commenting on the general linguistic differences in Taipei and Tainan, she described her fear of being assimilated into a non-standard Mandarin speaker.

(8)

YJ: Ranhou guoyu ye shi bu tai yiyang la. Jiushi, xiang, dabufen, ye buneng shuo dabufen

The Mandarin they speak is somehow different. That is, the majority, well, probably not necessarily the majority.

HY: Hmm.

YJ: Jiushi (.) Nage qiangdiao bu tai yiyang ei, jiushi, bijiao duo Taiwan guoyu (.) Ranhou (laugh), wo hen shenjingzhi, hui dao jia wen wo ma shuo, ma, wo xianzai hui bu hui Taiwan guoyu

Well (.) There are differences in accents. That is, it's more often that you hear Taiwanese-accented Mandarin here (.) And-uh (laugh) I am paranoid. I'd go home and ask my Mom, Mom, do I have Taiwanese-accented Mandarin now?

HY: (laugh) bu hui a.

(laugh) No, you don't.

YJ: Wo feichang zhizhang (laugh). Wo hen pa bei tonghua, hen kepa de. (laugh)

I am ridiculous. (laugh) I am very afraid of being assimilated. It's terrifying (laugh).

HY: (laugh)

YJ: Ranhou wo tongxue shuo, you name kongbu ma, jianghua xiang women yiyang you shenme bu ha one?

Then my classmate said, why is it so terrifying? What's so bad about speaking like us?

HY: (laugh)

YJ: Wo jiu shuo, mei shenme bu hao, zhishi wo bu xiang (laugh). Wo juede wo man shenjingzhi de.

I said, there's nothing bad, but I don't want to. (laugh) I think I am too paranoid.

YJ's report on her insecurity over losing her Taipei-style of speaking shows the connection between discursive awareness of regional difference and self-censorship on linguistic practices. If we examine her actual linguistic practices during the interview, as is mentioned in the beginning of this section, her style of speaking strikes me as very standard, both in terms of phonology and lexical choice. Her tendency to switch to English lexical items, such as "diversity,"

"discrimination," "fashion," and "species," also corresponds to quite a few interviewees' comments on the connection between Taipei-ans and English (or foreign language in general), which is valued either positively or negatively, depending on the interviewees' perspectives. Phonological variation in her speech is also examined and is presented later in the chapter as a comparison with the interviewee discussed in the next case study.

This section examines YJ's discursive and linguistic constructions of Taipei and Tainan as two socially distinctive places and of her related identities as an urbanite tolerant of heterogeneity and a participant of translocal cultural activities. The next section presents a different case from MX, a proud Tainanite who currently resides in Taipei.

THE CASE OF MX, A MALE TAINAN STUDENT AT NTU

MX was a freshman majoring in horticulture at NTU when the interview was conducted. He grew up in Xinying City in Tainan County and had lived in Taipei for around eight months at that time. The predominant language in the interview was Mandarin. However, unlike YJ in the previous analysis who used standard Mandarin intonation and lexicon almost throughout the interview, MX displayed a wider range of language use. He code-switched to both Taiwanese and English occasionally, and playfully performed Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, Beijing Mandarin, Mandarin with a foreign (Western) accent, and the intonation of

Cantonese in a number of occasions during the three-hour informal interview. A comparison between YJ's and MX's language use in their respective interviews is provided later in this chapter. In the following discussion, I present excerpts of MX's interview related to identity and region, focusing on both the discursive and linguistic means through which MX constructed his identity as a member of Tainan Student Association (hereafter TSA), a Tainanite, a Southerner, and a college student residing in Taipei.

TAINAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION

One of the questions that I raised in the interview was what the members perceive the functions or characteristics of the alumni associations to be. In response to this question, MX replied with *ningjuli qiang* "strong solidarity."

(9)

HY: Na ni juede Nanyouhui de tese, huoshi gongneng shi shenme=

What do you think are the characteristics or functions of Tainan Student Association?

MX: =Mm, Nanyouhui de tese oh, zaiyu, wo bu zhidao weishenme ye, zaiyu qunjuli qiang.

=Mm, the characteristic of Tainan Student Association, is, I don't know where it is from, is its solidarity.

HY: Hmm.

MX: Wo juede qunjuli hai suan gou, wo bu zhidao weishenme, danshi de hua, xiang Xiongyouhui, xiang Nanyouhui dongzhe san qian duo ge ren, zheme pangda de shetuan lai jiang de hua, qishi zai Taida shi shuyishuer la.

I think the solidarity is pretty strong. I don't know why, but, for example, Kaohsiung Student Association, well, it is rare to have a student organization that has this many members, around 3000 people, as Tainan Student Association. It's one of the largest at NTU.

HY: Mm.

MX: Ah, xiang wo shi juede, xiang tamen jiu juede, tingshuo Xiongyouhui jiu tingshuo shi san san de la.

Ah, I think, people think that Kaohsiung Student Association is a much looser organization.

Then MX continues to compare and contrast the solidarity and degree of member involvement of the regional alumni student organizations on campus with TSA. In this excerpt and the following discussion, the uniqueness of TSA only emerges in comparison to the Significant Others, the other regional alumni organizations on campus. As Bucholtz and Hall (2004a) and Eckert (2000) as well as many other

research on identity construction have noted, a perception of a shared identity often requires a sense of an Other who is perceived as socially oppositional. Interestingly, to be socially constituted as different also requires, to some extent, certain degree of sameness that serves as the backdrop and makes the construction of a contrast possible. In this case, among the numerous student organizations on NTU campus, only the alumni associations that share similar recruitment venues are constructed as the social Others.

MX then continues to elaborate on factors contributing to the stronger solidarity among TSA members. In the following excerpt, he relates the uniqueness of TSA that he perceives, i.e., its solidarity, to certain characteristics of Tainan, the members' common hometown. Instances of code-switching to Taiwanese are underlined and in bold. "A Night with TSA" that MX briefly mentions in this excerpt is an annual social and performing event of TSA, which is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

(10)

MX: Tese, qishi haiyou de tese jiushi, qishi, (a clicking sound), jiushi juede shuo, keneng you yizhong, yinwei qishi Tainan, Tainan gei renjia de ganjue jiushi fucheng ma

Uniqueness, the other uniqueness is, well, (a clicking sound), maybe there is a kind of, well, because Tainan, Tainan is perceived as FuCheng/Historic Capital

HY: Mm-mm

MX: Jiushuo, you zhong, jiushi dajia you yi zhong xiangxinli, xiang Nanyouzhiye ta benshen bushi you ren shuo jiu juede hen you zhigan ma=

That is, we (Tainan people) are bound together. For example, didn't people say that "A Night with TSA" is of high quality?

HY: =Mm.

MX: Yinwei diyi women nanbu, shuodao nanbu lai jiang, women nanbu ren shi yi Taiyu guashuai la.

Because first and foremost, in the South, we southerners use Taiwanese predominantly.

HY: Mm.

MX: Ranhou daji doushi, **tae long khong taigi***, zheyangzi. Diyi, yuyanjiu, xiangxinli jiu henda la, ranhou zailai de hua jiushi, ranhou jiushi dajia dou you zheyang,* **li Tailam lai e, nai u kho ling buehiang khong Taigi***, zheyang zi.*

And then everyone, **everyone speaks Taiwanese.** First, the language binds us together. Then secondly, we have this idea, **you are from Tainan, it's impossible that you can't speak Taiwanese**

HY: (laugh)

MX: Dui a, zhende, jiu zheyangzi. Zhiyao Tainan laide, Kaohsiung keneng meiyou name, name hao. Danshi dajia dou juede Tainan lai de yiding hui shuo Taiyu. Yuyan benshen jiu yige zhouxin le, ranhou, you you yi ge wenhua zuowei

zuowen yige genju(?), jiushuo, ***Tailam****, Tainan you henduo xiaochi a, jiujuede, jiu, qishi, zenme jiang, nanbu ren, Tainan ren dou juede man yi ziji de Tainan, Tainan wei ao de.*

Yes, really, it's true. As long as you are from Tainan. Kaohsiung people may not (speak Taiwanese) so well. But people think that if you are from Tainan, you got to be able to speak Taiwanese. The language itself serves as a pivot, and then there is also the culture. **Tainan**, Tainan has a variety of traditional regional cuisine. Southerners, Tainanites are generally proud of our own Tainan.

HY: Hmm-hmm.

MX: Dui a, yinwei women ziji zai Taibei, dou hen, hen, hen, hen xiang ma Taibei de tianqi. Oh, you zai xiayu, keshi Tainan zai chu taiyang (dramatic intonation). Ranhou re shi re de bansi, tianqi leng shi leng de bansi.

Right. We ourselves live in Taipei, and often can't stand the weather here. Oh, it's raining again, but it's sunny in Tainan (dramatic intonation). When it's hot it's terribly hot. When it's cold, it's terribly cold.

HY: Mm.

MX: Ranhou nan bu de hua. Ttaifeng lai mashang jiu yan shuizai. Nanbu nabian, jihu jiushi, henshao yan shuizai. Ranhou taifeng lai de shihou, cong beibu chuibudao, cong nanbu lai chui budao. Cong dongbian lai you zhongyang shanmai dang, dang de dao=

Then South, (In Taipei), whenever there is a hurricane, there is flood. In the South it seldom floods. When there is a hurricane, if it's from the North, (Tainan) won't be affected. If it's from the South, it won't be affected either. If it's from the East, the Central Mountains will block the wind=

HY: =Mm.

MX: Jiushuo, dangchu wo jiu juede, (a clicking sound), shoudu she zai nali, qingchao shoudi she zai nali zhen de shi hao.

I often think that to select (Tainan) as the capital, it was smart of the Ching Dynasty to establish the capital there.

HY: Mm.

MX: Erqie nanbu nabian wehua qixi qishi hai suan man zhong de. Jiushi, suiran shuo, women ziji bu juede, jiushi aiya, (a clicking sound), ziji duo you wenhua shuizhun. Danshi dajia yi jiang qi Tainan jiu hui xiang dao FuCheng, ranhou xiang dao FuCheng de hua jiuhui juede shuo, you henduo kongmiao a, shenme shenme de. Suoyi shuo, biancheng shuo, ni zai, ni shuo dao yige Tainan ren de shihou, ta nenggou hen rushujiazhen de shuo chulai henduo dongxi la =

In addition, in the South there is actually a strong sense of culturedness. Even though we ourselves don't feel that, (a clicking sound), how cultured we are. But whenever people mention Tainan, they would think of it as FuCheng/Historic Capital. Then they'll think of the Confucius Temple, etc.

Therefore, whenever you encounter a Tainanite, he will be able to tell you a whole lot about the place =

HY: =Mm.

MX: Suoyi shuo, henduo nenggou yi tamen ziji wei ao de dongxi. Suoyi shuo, biancheng shuo, ni shi Tainan ren, you henduo nenggou jiaoao de dongxi. Suoyi shuo, women hui juede shuo, keneng jiushi hui you zhe zhong xiangxinli zai. Zhe yang zi.

Therefore, they have a lot to be proud of. That is, you are a Tainanite, you have a lot to be proud of. Therefore, we feel that it's this that binds us together.

HY: Hmm-hmm.

MX: Dui a, wo juede zhe zhong, dajia dou shi you yi ge gongtong de dongxi de, de wenhua beijing, ranhou yuyan shiyong a, zheyangzi de ningjuli qilai de hua, suoyi shuo Nanyouhui keneng hui bi qita de, qita shenme hui de haiyao, haiyao nenggou, ningjuli haiyao da de hua, yeshi zheme pangda de yuanyin, keneng yeshi zhe yang zi ba.

Right. I think we all share something, a common cultural background. Plus language use. All these connect us. The reason that Tainan Student Association has a stronger sense of solidarity among members than other alumni associations may be because of this.

In this excerpt, MX specifies two factors perceived to be contributing to the bond among Tainanites: a shared pattern of language use and culture. While he contends that the ability to speak Taiwanese is considered a shared property of Tainanites, his code-switches to Taiwanese right at those moments are reminiscent of similar familiar comments circulating in the Tainan as well as Taiwan contexts and increase the discursive effect of his claim.

The connection between Tainan and the Taiwanese language is explicitly pointed out in this excerpt. However, the exact meaning of *wenhua* "culture" is not transparent when this term first appears in the conversation. Culture is first linked to the tradition of Taiwanese cuisine that Tainan is known for, and subsequently to the mild weather, the ideal geographical location that prevents Tainan from natural damage, and its suitability as a historic capital. The meaning of "culture" is still implicit, but gradually gains clarity as the conversation continues and a link between "culture" and "the traditional" begins to emerge. Approximately halfway through the conversation, MX finally explicitly elaborates on the sense of culturedness in Tainan and its relationship with Tainan as a former capital with some of the most recognized historic architecture and relics on the island. The Confucius Temple that MX raises as an example is not only a well-known historic architecture that served to worship Confucius, it was also a central institute of higher education in the settlement period and, to a certain degree, an attempt from the Chinese empire to "civilize" the island settlers. The Confucius Temple thus simultaneously symbolizes

educatedness, classicalness, and Tainan's unique role in the Taiwanese history. It may not be an accident that MX chose to mention the Confucius Temple rather than other equally high-profile historic architectures in Tainan in the national scale when the theme of his argument was the culturedness of Tainan.

The two shared properties of Tainanites proposed by MX, language and culture, are more specifically articulated as competence and frequent use of Taiwanese, on the one hand, and Tainan's symbolic status as the historic cultural center and birthplace of the "authentic" Han culture in Taiwan, on the other hand. The attributed importance of the two properties reemerges in several later passages in the interview and is in constant resonance with the above excerpt. For example, a short while after the above conversation, MX made comments on the production and performances in *Nanyou Zhi Ye*, "A Night with TSA," an annual performing event of TSA that often draws hundreds of audience on campus. In addition to his positive evaluation of the production as *you zhigan* "of high quality," he again emphasized the frequent switch from Mandarin to Taiwanese and the historic atmosphere created in one particular performance, *shouyu ju*, literally, sign language play, as representative of Tainan and TSA.

(11)

MX: …….erqie you zheng ge juben shenme de a, dou hai suan liu, hai man liuchang de. Dui. Erqie de hua~, jiu xiang shuo Taiyu ba, zenyang de, jiushi, dajia

zhende jiu you yizhong ganjue, jiushi (laugh), shuo taiyu shi Tainan ren de quanli (laugh). Wo juede you yizhong ganjue ye, tamen dou juede shuo, Tainan ren jiu yinggai shuo Taiyu. Tainan ren jiu yinggai Taiyu hen liu. Nanyou Zhi Ye de hua hen duo, hen duo shi Taiyu zai biaoda. (.)

Ranhou xiang nashihou zai shouyu ju de shihou, wo ye juede shuo jiushi, ganjue henyou women na zhong gudu de wenhua qizhi (laugh)=

…….And the scripts of the plays are all pretty smooth. Right. And-uh~, for example, the use of Taiwanese. People really have this feeling, that (laugh) it is Tainanites' right to speak Taiwanese. (laugh). I think there's a shared feeling like that. They all think that Tainanites should speak Taiwanese. Tainanites should be able to speak Taiwanese fluently. In "A Night with TSA" you could hear a lot of Taiwanese. (.)

And then, with regard to the sign language play, I think it really carries the cultured refinement (qizhi) of our historic capital.

HY: = Hmm-hmm.

MX: Dui, wo juede gudu de wenhua qizhi yizhi zai nabian yingzao de dou hai bucuo de. Chu le zuihou huizhang ju lai jiang, you Tainan ren diji (laugh)

Right, I think the cultured refinement of the historic capital is quite successfully generated throughout the program, except toward the end the co-presidents' play shows Tainanites' vulgarity (laugh).

HY: (laugh)

MX: Danshi wo zhende juede zhengge Nanyou Zhi Ye de nage, yingzao de nage shi bucuo la.

But I really think that the atmosphere was very well created in "A Night with TSA."

MX again makes a reference to language and culture in this passage. What is particularly interesting is his comment on the sign language play as carrying *gudu de wenhua qizhi,* the cultured refinement of the historic capital. The term *qizhi* has been analyzed earlier in this chapter in the discussion of the competing views between Taipei and Tainan students on regional differences. An understanding of MX's comment on the sign language play, one of the six plays performed in "A Night with TSA," critically relies on the knowledge of what the plot of the play and Tainan as a cultural place mean to MX as one of the audience. In the following paragraphs, I first provide background information about the play and proceed to the analysis of how the connection between the play and Tainan's cultured refinement are established.

As mentioned above, "A Night with TSA" is an annual performing event produced and participated in by TSA members. The event has become one of the most important project for TSA at NTU over the years, which routinely takes place in late March and the preparation and recruitment begins as early as November in the previous year. The event typically has six sections, which begins with a dance

performance, followed by a variety of plays, and ends with the co-presidents' play, a play often humorously caricaturizing the current TSA co-presidents' life. Sign language play, the play that MX comments on in the excerpt, is a popular performance genre in the Taiwanese college settings that involves all the necessary elements of a regularly play—a story, acting, dialogues, lighting, costumes, etc.—plus a number of recorded popular songs inserted in the play that correspond to the story line. While the songs are played, the actors sign the lyrics, typically in a mixture of Taiwanese sign language and signed Chinese. The signing, however, does not follow strictly the hand shapes and the grammars of Taiwanese sign language and signed Chinese and is choreographed into a dance-like visual performance. In many ways, the song-and-sign sections of such plays are similar to pantomimes, although the other parts of sign language plays include verbal dialogues. The intended audience in such plays in college settings is usually hearing people. Since the signs are significantly transformed for theatrical and aesthetic reasons, they are most likely unintelligible to deaf audience (Chen, 2005, personal communication).

The "A Night with TSA" that MX commented on took place in March 2003. The sign language play in this event was poetically entitled *Hong Lei*, literally "red tear," a woman's tear. The story was set at Shanghai in 1937, when the war between China and Japan had just begun. A tragic love story between a rich but patriotic male youngster who volunteers to join the army to protect his country and a

young female cabaret singer who loses hope when her lover is missing and is forced to turn to prostitution for living, the play manages to recreate the classical atmosphere of Shanghai in the 30's (or at least, an imagined version of that era) with costumes (e.g. Chi-Pao & Feng-Xian dresses, both are traditional Chinese dresses, for female roles and soldiers' uniforms in the that period for male roles), actors' graceful body movement, as well as the language they use. In contrast to other contemporary plays which use Mandarin in a less enunciated way and code-switch to Taiwanese and English more or less, in this play, the language is entirely in Mandarin, with overall very standard pronunciation and noticeable effort from the actors in making retroflex sounds as clear as possible.

The connection between Shanghai in the 30's and an enunciated style of Mandarin that takes (at least partially) Beijing Mandarin as reference is perhaps more of an imagination and a symbolic connection than a factual presentation. I have a fuller discussion on the ideological linkage between language and the setting in this play in later sections. For the purpose of current discussion, I would like to focus on MX's comment that this play carries a sense of cultured refinement characteristic of Tainan. Given that he had explicitly and repeatedly reported a link between Tainan and the Taiwanese language, it is seemingly contradictory that MX made the connection between Tainan and this play, in which the actors spoke in a way distinctively different from the majority of Tainanites.

It appears that what leads MX to make the connection is his view of Tainan as a place associated with the traditional, the classical, and olden times. His implicit definition of "culture" as the properties and activities related to olden times surfaced once again in his discussion on *cho chapliak hui,* the 16th birthday, a unique traditional ceremony of adulthood for both genders that Tainan City is known for, and on the variety of traditional customs and rites that many Tainanites' still practice nowadays.

(12)

MX: ……Nanbu zhende xisu hen duo, Taibei jiu tuoli jiu shidai tai jiu le. Xiang women dou zhidao

……In the South we really have many traditional customs. Taipei has turned too far away from the old time. We all know (these traditions)

HY: ***heN***

Mm.

MX: ***tang si thiNkong seN a,*** *ama hui gaosu mama, mama hui gaosu meimei, yidai hui chuan gei yidai.*

When the birthday of the God of the Sky is, Grandma will tell Mom, Mom will tell my sister. It will be passed down from generation to generation.

……(Discuss various traditional customs, with an increasing amount of code-switching to Taiwanese)

MX: Hen haowan a, youshihou bijiao jiuhui juede, women zenme momingqimiao yidui xisu a, shenme de, henduo a, lisu henduo a, shenme de. Biqing qishi, youshiyou jiuhui xiangdao zhexie xisu shenmede jiuhui juede hai man jiaoao de, women shi wenhua gudu a, (playful tone) Nimen zhexie mei wenhua de a.

It's interesting. Sometimes in comparison, I'd think that how come we have so many traditional customs, a lot of manners and ceremonies, etc. In fact, sometimes when I think of these traditions I feel quite proud. We are the cultured historic capital, (playful tone). You are those people who don't have a culture.

HY: (laugh)

In this passage, Taipei and Tainan are contrasted as places with different degree of attachment to the traditions. These traditions are articulated by MX as a facet of the old values and the culturedness that Tainan as a historic capital embraces. Taipei, in contrast, is jokingly commented as a place without culture. Language choice in this passage also corresponds to MX's discussion on the traditions. The occurrence of Taiwanese significantly increases in number and length when he illustrates his points with specific examples of the traditions.

While MX explicit displays his pride on being a Tainanite and his appreciation of the most salient characteristics of Tainan, articulated as the frequent use of Taiwanese and the symbolic status of Tainan as the holder of the traditional and classical Han culture in Taiwan, the Taiwanese language and the definition of *qizhi*, take on a somewhat different meaning in the following excerpt when MX responded to my question that whether he had experienced any culture shock when moving to Taipei.

(13)

HY: Na ni juede ni dao Taibei lai you mei you shenme wenhua chongji, jiushi cong Tainan dao Taibei=

Did you encounter any culture shock when you came to Taipei, from Tainan to Taipei=

MX: =Wenhua chongji, oh~ haoda=

= Culture shock, ooh, it's pretty huge =

HY: =Haoda oh

= It's huge

MX: Wenhua chongji ye henda. Diyi, jiu (a clicking sound), henduo la, jiu guang shi wo, wo jiu, wo kaishi hui zhuzhong wode chuanzhuo a,

The culture shock was pretty huge. First of all, umm, (a clicking sound), there are many. Take myself for example, I began to pay more attention to how I dress.

HY: Hmm-hmm

MX: Ranhou kaishi hui qu, kaishi huiqu, shaowei jiushi, kan renjia daban shi zenmeyang. Ranhou ziji tou, ziji toufa shenme shenme, ranhou huiqu jia li zhongyu keyi xian wo mei, heng, ni zhe chuanzhuo wo gen ni jiang Taibei xianzai [chuan qilai shi zenyang zenyang de. Wo jiu kaishi xian ta.

Then I began to, began to observe how other people dress. And also pay attention to my hair, etc. And finally I can go home and criticize my sister, (an interjection displaying contempt), the way you dress, let me tell you how people dress in Taipei. I began to criticize her.

HY: [(laugh)

……..

MX: A wo, a wo shi yinwei zai Taibei kan le, suoyi shuo wo jiu geng nenggou xian ta, zenyang zenyang de. (.) Dui a, xiang chuanzhuo a, shenme pinwei de, waizai zhengge ganjue la, jiu kan le henduo buyiyang ren de qizhi. Yinwei yiqian zai nanbu a, zai xiangxia xuexiao, qishi shuo qizhi a, (laugh) dajia dou shi hen zao de. (laugh).

And me, it's because I've been in Taipei, so I can criticize her. (.) Right, for example, dressing style, taste, the appearances, I've seen the qizhi/refined

disposition of a variety of people. In the past in the South, in rural schools, in terms of qizhi, (laugh), everyone's pretty bad. (laugh)

HY: (laugh)

MX: Dui a, xiangxia nansheng dou (lower volume) ***kan li niaN la****, (resume volume)* ***siopha la, siochíng la,*** *(laugh),* ***alupa*** *(laugh)*

Right, boys in rural areas (lower volume and perform their ways of speaking) **fuck your mother** , (resume volume) **fighting, beating each other up, alupa**

……..

(a short discussion on Alupa, a playful, vulgar physical torture among high school male students)

MX: (laugh) suoyi haoxiang wanquan yi hui dao Taiyu de shijie, you de mei de hua, mei shuizhun de dou yiwofeng de, ***oh, li chit chia si ti a, ti a, tiathao*** *shenme shenme de. Keshi lai dao Taibei de hua, oh, ni zhe zhi si zhu, buhui zheyang ma.*

(laugh) So it's like once you go back to the world of Taiwanese, all those vulgar words just come out naturally. **Oh, you, the dead pig, pig, pighead,** and so on and so on. But when you come to Taipei, you won't shout, oh, you the dead pig.

HY: Mm-mm (laugh)

MX: Jiu shuo, jiu shuo, dingduo jiu shuo, oh, ni hao ben o.

You'll say, at most you'll say, oh, you are really stupid.

HY: Mm-hmm.

MX: Zenme shuo, wanquan jiu gen naxie, jiu gen naxie ziyan wanquan fen (X) guanxi le, dui a. Jiu shi, yuyan de shiyong dehua, turan pinwei wanquan jiu pifen yideng……

How to say it, completely, when you speak Mandarin you are completely separated from those words. Right. Different language use, suddenly taste seems totally different…..

In this passage, the meaning of *qizhi* seems to shift from a connection with the traditional Han culture in Tainan, in which the Taiwanese language appears to play an intrinsic role, to a linkage between *qizhi* and the urban and cosmopolitan Taipei, and a distancing from the Taiwanese language. The link between a lack of *qizhi* and the Taiwanese language is established both discursively and linguistically. Discursively, MX commented on the seemingly natural connection between swear words and the Taiwanese language. Linguistically, MX switched from Mandarin to Taiwanese to exemplify what he meant by *qizhi hen zao*, very bad *qizhi*. At this point he performed a common swear phrase with a noticeable lower volume in Taiwanese and referred to the unrefined behaviors such as fighting and sexual torture once again in Taiwanese. At first glance, it may seem that the switch to Taiwanese in reference to the swear phrase *kan li niaN* "fuck your mother" and the sexual torture *alupa* was mandatory, given that they have no equivalent in Mandarin

in the Taiwanese context. However, it is indeed the lack of an equivalent of those terms in Mandarin spoken in Taiwan that provides a locus for investigating how the ideological linkage between Taiwanese and its social meanings is constructed partly as a product of language policies in the past and how such ideologies are constantly reinforced, contested, and reshaped in each interactional moment. In this particular case, while the marginalization of Taiwanese as a language of lower class and of the private setting in the past language policies, along with a number of other reasons beyond the scope of the current discussion (e.g., the relationship between masculinity, swear words, and Taiwanese), collectively contribute to the lack of an alternative in Mandarin, the social meanings attached to Taiwanese are again reinforced when a speaker does have a choice in language: other terms that MX used in describing rural boys' vulgar behaviors, such as *siopha* "fighting," *sioching* "bumping each other," do have close Mandarin equivalent. However, given the indexical meanings Taiwanese accrues over time, the use of Taiwanese in reference to these physical confrontations appears to render the description more colorful.

While MX displayed positive attitudes toward both types of *qizhi*, i.e., both forms of culturedness, the two strands of ideological thinking may result in conflicting evaluations on the social meanings of Taiwanese. The following excerpt further illustrates that in addition to his appreciation of the historic values associated with Tainan, MX also expressed his strong motivation to "catch up with" the latest trends in technology when he moved to Taipei.

(14)

HY: hai you qita de ma?

Are there any other (impact/perceived differences)?

MX: Haiyou qita chongji. Mm~ sixiang shang yeshi you la, jiushuo, ni yinggai laidao yi ge xin, Taibei zheme dushi hua de difang, faner o, jiuxiang, hen qiguai o, Taibei ren o, buhui (laugh), jiu gen tamen jiang yixie keji lei de dongsi, zhe suishendie la, ***che siaNmi mikaN, saN che MD la****, wanquan ting budong (laugh). Ranhou shuodao diannao a, shenme de, wanquan bu liao,*

Other impact. Mm.. there are also differences in the way people think. When you come to a new place, as urbanized as Taipei, it is surprising that Taipei-an, they don't, (laugh). It's weird. When I talk to them about technology, this is a digital massive storage device, **What is this? What? This is MD**. They don't know what I am talking about. (laugh) When I talk about computer, they completely don't understand.

HY: Ni shuo Taibei ren shi bu shi?

Do you mean Taipei-an?

MX: Dui a. (higher pitch) wo juede hao muomingqimiao o. Juede, qiguai

Yes. (higher pitch) I have no clue why so. It's weird.

HY: (laugh)

MX: Jiushi women juede, yifangmian shi nanbu o, ni lai, jiushi cong nanbu laidao Taibei, hui, hui, yifangmian, dangchu zai nanbu ni hui hen xiang yao gen xianzai de shijie jiushi, zuo yige pingxing. Jiushi, ni hui buduan de yizhi qu zhuizhu yixie xinde dongxi. Xiang wo jiuhui hen xihuan qu, diannao, yixie diannao shebei de yixie dongxi. Wo jiu hen xihuan qu. Mei shi jiu qu diannao chanpin guang yi guang a, shenme de. Dui a. Ranhou lai dao Taibei de hua, jiu zhende shi tiantang le. Meishi jiu qu guanghua shangchang a, dui a. Jiu kan yixia, mm, LCD xianzai duo shao, kan gaoxing de la.

That is, I think, we come from the South and come to Taipei. When we were in the South, we'd have this strong motivation to keep up with the world. You'd have this desire to pursue new things. Like me, I really liked to window shop in computer stores. Then I came to Taipei, and it's like paradise here. When I have time, I'd go to the Guanghua Commercial Center, taking a look at the latest digital products. How much does a LCD monitor cost now, etc. Just for fun.

HY: Hmm-hmm.

MX: (XXX) keshi wenti shi, laidao Taibei, keshi, gen Taibei ren shuo qilai, tamen dou, a, na shenme? Jiushi, tamen shenghuo de yige, tamen dadao yi ge gao chu, danshi tamen meiyou shuo meiyou zai xiang yao wang geng jinbu huoshi zenmeyang de difang qu zou. A women shi yinwei cong nanbu lai, suoyi juede jiu shuo, ziji bururen, jiu juede, hen xiangyao yizhi ba dongxi jiajinqu jiajinqu.

Jiu shuo, xiangyao jiu shuo, xuede geng duo. Jiu shuo, xuexi de dongle bi tamen qiang.

(XXX) But the problem is, when I came here, I talked to Taipei-ans about these things, and they were like, what's that? It seems that they have reached a high point, and they don't have the motivation to pursue something higher. As for us, we are from the South, so we feel that we are lacking something and would really want to add as much information to ourselves as possible. We'd like to learn, and have stronger motivation than they do.

Although this excerpt begins with MX expressing his surprise that some Taipei-ans are not as technologically savvy as he has imagined, my purpose here is to illustrate the existing image of Taipei as the center of latest trends in the Taiwanese context, realized in fashion, technology, etc., and MX's highly motivated pursuit of this alternative form of *qizhi*, which, at times, may conflict with his attachment to the symbolic meanings of Tainan and the Taiwanese language. Through a careful investigation of MX's definitions on *qizhi*, we are able to systematically describe the two lines of thinking on culturedness that co-exist in MX's comments as well as in media and popular discourses circulating in Taiwanese society. The two definitions on culturedness are accompanied by two dichotomies that I term urban sophistication and classical sophistication. In Figure 5 below I schematize their relationships based on MX's report and comment on *qizhi,*

culture, regional differences, and language use. The axis of classical sophistication has the traditional, the authentic Han culture in Taiwan on one end and the new, the hybrid, on the other end. The axis of urban sophistication has the global and cosmopolitan on one end and has the local as the opposition on the other. The two axes may have much in common, but it is useful to separate them, since the two axes place different emphasis on those oppositions: the axis of classical sophistication on the authenticity of Han culture and the axis of urban sophistication on the global and the cosmopolitan. The two locations compared in MX's interviews, Taipei and Tainan, are placed respectively on the lower right corner and on the upper left corner, given their associations with characteristics featured in the figure. MX's stances as revealed by his comments on *qizhi* and culture are represented in the figure with the two little circles on the left and at the bottom.

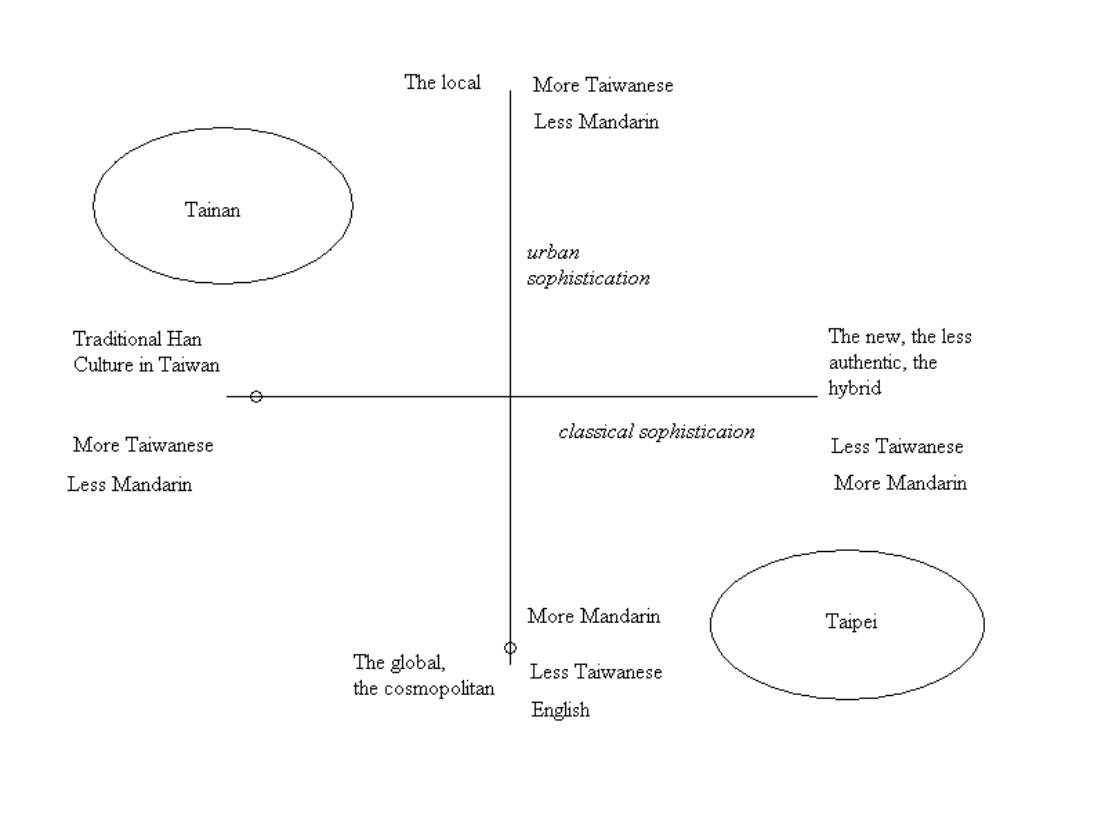

Figure 5. The relationships between languages, culture, and definitions of *qizhi* as manifested in MX's comments.

As we can see, languages in Taiwan, such as Taiwanese, Mandarin, and English, are differently situated in the figure. The presence of English in the figure and its association with Taipei are supported by MX's comments on the use of English in Taipei and Tainan. In a discussion on variations in Mandarin, MX responds with the following.

(15)

MX: Taibei, tamen guoyu shi hai hao la, fanzheng tamen pingchang dou jiang guoyu.

In Taipei, their Mandarin is alright. They are used to speaking Mandarin.

HY: Hmm-hmm

MX: Ranhou tamen shi xiguan guoyu za yingyu la.

They'd mix Mandarin and English.

HY: Hmm-hmm

MX: Women shi guoyu za taiyu la (laugh)

We'd mix Mandarin and Taiwanese. (laugh)

HY: Hmm-hmm

MX: (laugh) Suoyi shuo, xiguan xing yongyu [buyiyang

(laugh) So we are used to speaking in different ways

HY: [xiguan xing yongyu buyiyang

[used to speaking in different ways

*MX: Youshihou, (laugh) xiang wo **stand by** ting le henjiu, wo xianzai cai dagai bijiao liaojie ta de yisi.*

Sometimes, (laugh) for example, it took me quite a long time to understand what ***stand by*** means.

HY: Hmm-hmm.

MX: Dui a. Meishi jiu zai nali ***stand by, stand by, stand by, stand by.*** *Yikaishi wo shi yitouwushui,* ***stand by*** *shi shenme. (laugh)*

Right. Out of blue they'd say **stand by, stand by, stand by, stand by.** At first I had no clue at all. What is **stand by**? (laugh)

In this passage, MX reported on Taipei-ans' tendency to borrow English phrases into Mandarin in daily interactions and his lack of understanding of such practices when he first came to Taipei City. The phrase "stand by" is most frequently used to refer to a state of readiness in the Taiwanese context. Later in the interview, MX also commented that while mixing English in conversation may be considered a normal practice in Taipei, in the South it is perceived otherwise.

(16)

MX: ……zai beibu shuo yingwen shi hen zhengchang de, hui nanbu hui bei renjia, ***ho:::, chhiang ingbun o.***

It is normal to use English in the North. In the South people will say, **ho:::, you are showing off your English**

As shown in the figure and in the above analysis, MX's two definitions of culturedness may lead to conflicting views on the Taiwanese language. On the axis of classical sophistication, Taiwanese is perceived as a desirable characteristic,

adding to the sense of culturedness associated with Tainan and the solidarity among Tainanites, while on the axis of urban sophistication, Taiwanese is less appreciated and may be linked with localness or even with vulgarity. In the meantime, the two definitions of culturedness and the different and at times conflicting views on Taiwanese also reflect two facets of MX's identities: his pride as a Tainanite and a holder of the traditional Han culture, and his alignment with some of the characteristics associated with the urban, trendy, intellectual, translocal Taipei that he perceives.

It is through talk, specifically, through his discursive comments and language choice, that MX constructed multiple facets of his identities in this interview context. The above excerpts and the accompanying analysis show a number of instances of code-switching from Mandarin, the predominant language in the interview, to Taiwanese, and such switches often correspond to the invocation of certain aspects of Tainan or traditional Han culture. However, another salient aspect of MX's identity is related to his living experience in Taipei, perceived by MX as a place with information of latest technology, current fashion trends, and less enthusiasm with Taiwanese but higher inclination to use English.

The next question is, are there aspects of his language choice that correspond to his self-presentation as a college student currently residing in Taipei? The answer appears to be yes. MX code-switched occasionally to single English words or phrases, but the occurrences of English were noticeably fewer than those of

Taiwanese. While in excerpt (15) MX comments on Taipei-ans' tendency to borrow English words and phrases and reports on his initial confusion about this practice, he himself switches to English words/phrases such as *style, fashion,* when addressing the different fashion trends in Taipei and Tainan and borrows words/phrases such as *partner, xue dongxi wanquan shi* ***up to you***, "what you would like to learn is completely **up to you,**" in his discussion of the learning environment at NTU. Through his language choice and discursive comments in the interview, MX constantly repositioned himself and constructed his multiple identities in relation to the different topics. He was neither just a Tainanite nor a Taipei-an wannabe. He was some of both and more.

A COMPARISON BETWEEN YJ AND MX

So far I have examined the discursive practices of YJ and MX in their respective interviews. Their overall language use is also discussed, with a focus on where code-switching takes place in the discourse and how the discursive structure and code-switching interact with each other in mutually constitutive ways in the meaning-making, identity-constructing processes.

Both YJ and MX articulated the salience of language in their development of regional awareness and identities. In her interview, YJ displayed a strong identification with the characteristics associated with Taipei City and Taipei-ans through the narration of her unpleasant experiences speaking Taiwanese with her

southern peers and her comment on Tainan (and perhaps South in general) as a conservative place with less diversity. She also reported, somewhat embarrassed, on her insecurity over being assimilated linguistically and losing her standard Taiwan Mandarin after living in Tainan for five years. Unlike YJ, who aligned herself strongly and solely with Taipei and what Taipei represents in the interview, MX displayed highly positive attitudes toward his hometown, Tainan, but simultaneously identified with certain aspects of Taipei.

Their different stances also correspond to their language use in the interview. In terms of language choice, while Mandarin serves as the predominant language in both interviews, the amount of code-switching and the languages employed in switching display noticeable differences. Throughout the interview, YJ code-switched much less frequently, and the direction of the switch was entirely to English. The lack of switching to Taiwanese may not necessarily be an issue of competence: she is self-identified as relatively fluent in Taiwanese in comparison to most of her Taipei peers, had once won the first place in a Taiwanese oratorical contest in junior high school, and her internship in the university hospital requires her to constantly interact with patients who are predominantly Taiwanese speakers. It is more likely that the intertwining relationship of her attitudes toward Taipei and Tainan and her self-presentations as someone with traits characteristic of Taipei are reflected in her language choice, especially in the interview context when regional awareness was highlighted and when she explicitly sought to establish a social

distinction between the Taipei-an and the Other, perhaps partly due to my identity as a fellow Taipei-an, as evidenced in her discursive practices.

In contrast, MX code-switched much more extensively, mostly to Taiwanese, but occasionally to English as well. His wider range of language choice and the more variable pattern of switching throughout the interview appear to correspond to his multiple identifications with both Tainan and the traditional Han culture that Tainan symbolizes and the progressiveness and cosmopolitaness that Taipei represents. Again, my role as a Taipei-an may also have an impact on the self-images MX constructed. The tailored responses, however, do not mean that the above arguments are any less logical. After all, identity is not fixed characteristics belonging to one single person but involves intersubjectivity between all participants in an interaction.

In terms of phonological realization of Mandarin, the predominant language in the interviews, YJ and MX also display certain differences. YJ's Mandarin in the interview strikes me as highly standard, while MX's is noticeably less so. To illustrate in a quantifiable manner how their Mandarin phonology differs, I coded four variables in Taiwan Mandarin based on excerpt (4) from YJ's interview and excerpt (14) from MX's interview. In both excerpts, YJ and MX responded to my questions about whether they encountered any culture shock when moving from their hometown to the cities of their current residency. Although the excerpts only include a small portion of the interviews, I believe that such a comparison serves its

purpose: to illustrate how YJ's and MX's speech shows linguistic variation both on the levels of language choice and phonology and, more broadly, to contribute to the discussion of micro-analysis of language as a means of understanding how ideologies and social structures are manifested and constantly reshaped.

CODED PHONOLOGICAL VARIABLES

In these excerpts, four phonological variables of Taiwan Mandarin are coded.

(1) De-retroflexion: retroflex consonants [tʂ], [tʂ^{h}], [ʂ], [z̧] are pronounced as [ts], [ts^{h}], [s], [z]. For example, 'equipment' [**ʂ**ɣpei] becomes [**s**ɣpei]

(2) Monothongization of [ou]: For example, 'then' [z̧anh**ou**] becomes [z̧anh**o**].

(3) Monothongization of [ie] when preceded by non-laminal consonants: For example, 'computer' [t**ie**nnao] becomes [t**e**nnao].

(4) The merge of [ŋ] with [n]: For example, 'life' [ʂəŋhuo] becomes [ʂənhuo].

The four variables are listed in the order of their relative salience in the Taiwanese context. Retroflexion is perhaps the most attended-to feature in the discussion of standard (as well as non-standard) Mandarin in popular metalinguistic discourse and has a label of its own—*juanshe yin*, sounds with a curly tongue. It is also investigated in a number of research studies (e.g., Cheng, 1989; e.g., Kubler, 1979; Li, 1992; Thatcher, 1995) as a major phonological feature that contrasts Beijing Mandarin and Taiwan Mandarin, on the one hand, and the standard Taiwan Mandarin and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, on the other. Among my interviewees, nearly every one of them mentioned retroflex when commenting on the specific linguistic features characteristic of standard Taiwan Mandarin or Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. It is also often used in parodic performances in speech as well as in online contexts (such as Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin discussed later in Chapter 6).

The monothongizations of (ou) and (ie) do not have as salient a presence in the general public's metalinguistic comments. Lay people without linguistic training usually cannot articulate the existence of these variables. However, they are frequently used in parodies on TV that imitate celebrities with a noticeable Taiwanese accent in speaking Mandarin. In other words, the sound effect might be familiar, but there has not been a popular label available to describe these variables.

The fourth variable, the merge of [ŋ] with [n], is of a different nature from the previous ones. The merge of syllable final nasals has an early appearance in a

scholarly discussion on the comparison between Beijing Mandarin and Taiwan Mandarin in Kubler (1979), but seems less commented on by the general public. While the distinction between [n] and [ŋ] is still taught in elementary school, in contemporary Taiwan, even news anchors, often perceived as representatives of standard Taiwan Mandarin, sometimes merge the two sounds. In Labov's terms (1972b), the above three variables, with their social salience, can be considered social markers, while the merge of syllable final nasals is not.

The coding results of the two excerpts are shown below in table 4.

TABLE 4. CODING RESULTS OF TWO EXCERPTS, (4) AND (14)

		De-retroflexion	Mono. (ou)	Mono. (ie)	Nasal merger
YJ	% of NS pronunciation	12.5	23.1	0	80.0
	No. of NS tokens	6	3	0	4
	Total tokens	48	13	10	5
MX	% of NS pronunciation	72.5	42.9	28.6	16.7
	No. of NS tokens	37	3	2	1
	Total tokens	51	7	7	6

If we focus on the first three variables, it is clear that, in accordance with YJ's lower frequency of code-switching in a predominantly Mandarin interview, her phonological pattern also appears to be more standard than MX's. Similarly, while MX displays a wider range of code-switching both in terms of number of

occurrences and directions of switching, his Mandarin phonology also shows more variation than YJ's.

However, although otherwise leaning toward the standard, with regard to the fourth variable, YJ displays a high degree of non-standard pronunciation and merges [ŋ] with [n] four times out of the five tokens in this excerpt. The exact nature and distribution of this variable in the Taiwanese population are beyond the scope of this study, yet this phenomenon raises an interesting question, which I wish to address briefly: What is a standard language or variety? From whose perspective do we grant someone's speech to be more (or less) standard than somebody else's?

My initial impression of YJ's speech in the interview is that it is phonologically highly standard, much more so than MX's speech in his interview. However, as suggested by the coding results above, if we examine phonological variables one by one against the textbook standard (and the textbook standard generally takes Beijing Mandarin as reference in the Taiwanese context), we may find that those perceived as speaking with a standard phonology may, in fact, display a wider range of variation in their speech than we would like to believe. Linguistic variables are never equally weighed, and the perception of one as more salient than others is always social and ideological. In YJ's case, on the one hand, the lack of social salience of the nasal merger makes it possible for it to "escape" from YJ's self-censorship. On the other hand, it is precisely because YJ, many of her well-educated Taipei peers, and news anchors merge [ŋ] with [n] that this "non-

standard" variable remains under the consciousness of general public in Taiwan. An investigation of this merger in contemporary Taiwan is beyond the scope of this study, but it is likely that this merger participates undergoing the process of linguistic change. It is possible that this variable is increasingly associated with Taipei/the North and the variety of local prestige is moving away from the prescriptive standard. I will leave this question to future study.

Regional Awareness, Identities, and Language Use

The two case studies and their comparisons provide us an opportunity to investigate the interaction between discursive practices and micro-level language use. Specifically, on the discursive level, we have seen that particular languages are linked to different regions in Taiwan through complex meaning-making processes. Languages such as Taiwanese, Mandarin, and English are not assigned to regional labels simply based on who speaks what more frequently. Rather, the meanings of each language are interpreted in relation to and in conjunction with the symbolic meanings that MX and YJ attach to the locations significant to them. In this sense, in MX's case, Taiwanese comes to be associated with the traditional, authentic Han culture in Taiwan through Tainan's symbolic status as the birthplace of Han settlement. From YJ's perspective, however, Taiwanese is linked with Tainanites' lack of linguistic tolerance and, subsequently, to Tainan's lack of cultural diversity.

Partly through the contrastive views on Taipei and Tainan both on YJ's and MX's part, Mandarin and Taiwanese are further constructed as oppositional, even though they are used side-by-side in YJ's and MX's, as well as many Taiwanese people's daily life. In other words, the social meanings of a language do not only come from the semiosis of Taipei and Tainan as distinctive cultural places, but also from what they stand in contrast to—Mandarin as the opposite of Taiwanese becomes a language that indicates an alienation from the traditional, on MX's part, and a language that indexes cultural diversity and progressiveness, on YJ's part.

The investigation of the discursive structure of the interviews illustrates how YJ and MX as social agents presented themselves in an interview context through displaying their identifications with particular places and consequently with the social meanings attached to these places. Through this process, the agents' identities, the social meanings of the languages and places in question are constantly negotiated and constructed. The four-way mutually constitutive relationship between identity, language, place, and audience/context is achieved not only at the discursive level, but also at the level of linguistic practices. The above analyses show how specific instances of code-switching to Taiwanese and English contribute to the discursive power in certain interactional moments and how YJ's and MX's general patterns of code-switching and phonological variation in Mandarin correspond to their self-presentations and identities as Taipei-ans, Tainanites, cultural activity participants, college students, and so many more.

It is, however, important to note that the agency YJ and MX displayed in their identity construction in the interviews is conditioned by social structure and the discourses of regional contrast circulating in Taiwanese society. A comparison between YJ's and MX's interviews and the discussion in media discourses and the general attitudes toward the North and the South among their peers across the four student groups in the previous sections shows a significant degree of convergence between these different forms of data. The intertextuality suggests a dialogic relationship between the situated, current practice either at the discursive or linguistic level and the meanings similar practices accrue over time in the society, on the one hand, and individual agency and social structure, on the other. As well-known practice theorists Giddens (1979) and Bourdieu (1991) have demonstrated, while human beings are endowed with capacity to act, their actions are inevitably shaped by the very social structures that those actions in turn serve to reinforce or reconfigure.

The remaining part of this chapter analyzes another type of data: language use in performative contexts. While the settings are different, the main focus remains on the discursive and linguistic means through which various identities are constructed.

4.4 Regional Awareness and Member Solidarity in Performance Contexts

This section examines the extent to which regional awareness contributes to the presentation of regionally based groups in a performance setting and the solidarity among group members, as well as the role language plays in these processes. Specifically, I investigate how two student organizations that I worked with presented themselves as a group in their respective annual social events. The two events are "A Night with TSA," produced by Tainan Student Association, NTU, which has been briefly discussed in the case study of MX's interview, and The 30th Annual Family Concert, produced by C.Y. chorus. The analytical emphasis is placed primarily on the former, "A Night with TSA"; the latter mainly serves as a contrast.

The two events have quite a few similarities. Both are probably the most important performing events of the respective student organizations that showcase the versatile talents of their members. Both serve several social functions. First, successful productions of these events require the participation of a considerable number of members. The freshman members are especially encouraged to take part in related activities. Through the planning, rehearsing, and performing, new members are socialized into this community of practice (Wenger, 1998) and gradually develop a sense of what this event means to the group and how the group sees themselves. In addition, all the participating members, new or old, mutually engage in this process. A greater sense of belonging and identity emerges, which is

often clearly articulated through posted messages on the associations' electronic bulletin boards after the performances on the pride, the love, and the satisfaction the participants are filled with as part of the successful productions and performances.

While these events increase the sense of solidarity between participating members, they also serve as reunions for less active and senior members. These more peripheral members attend the social events to unite with old friends, to receive updated information about the organizations, and to meet new members. In addition to the organization-internal social functions, these events are also recognized by the student organizations as opportunities to increase positive publicity on campus. Members are highly encouraged to invite their friends, and for the case of C.Y. chorus, their families as well.

The multiple social functions of these events make them an especially interesting locus to investigate the interaction between language, regional awareness, identities, and the organizations' self-presentations. I begin the analysis with an overview of the program of "A Night with TSA," and proceed to various ways a TSA identity is constructed in this performing event.

4.4.1 "A Night with TSA"

As has mentioned in the analysis of MX's interview, "A Night with TSA" is an annual performing event typically held in March. The title of the 2003 production that I analyze is *Yu Nan Gong Wu,* "Dances with Tainan," which is reminiscent of

the translated title of a famous Hollywood movie, *Yu Lang Gong Wu,* "Dances with Wolves." The event was composed of six plays or dance performances, connected by two hosts' side comments and introductions to the upcoming performances. The six performance categories and their respective titles are summarized in the following table in the order they appeared in the event. Some of the titles are in Mandarin, while other in English. In the case of co-presidents' Play, even mathematical symbols are used. The Romanization of the characters is given in parentheses.

TABLE 5. PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES AND RESPECTIVE TITLES IN "A NIGHT WITH TSA."

PERFORMANCE CATEGORY		TITLE	
as listed in the program	translation	as listed in the program	translation
開場舞 (kaichang wu)	*opening dance*	Dancing Seeds	*n/a*
手語劇 (shouyu ju)	*sign language play*	紅淚 (honglei)	*A woman's tears*
創意劇 (chuangyi ju)	*creativity play*	斤斤計較 (jinjinjijiao)	*Counting every gram*
土風舞 (tufeng wu)	*folk dance*	花嫁 (huajia)	*Flowery wedding*
歌舞劇 (gewu ju)	*song and dance show*	Love in Dancing	*n/a*
會長劇 (huizhang ju)	*co-presidents' play*	長*寬= ∞	*length*width = ∞*

Even a glimpse at the performance categories and language use in the titles reveals the variety and versatility TSA and the production seek to present. Each performance is distinctively different from the others. In the dance categories, the opening dance combines a number of western dance styles, including hip-hop, jazz, and funk. The folk dance, on the other hand, is choreographed based on Chinese folk style. The song and dance show involves both singing and western ballroom dance. The plays also show a range of variety. While the sign language play is a tragic love story set in Shanghai in the 30's, the creativity play seeks to draw laughter with parodies of popular TV shows and social phenomena in contemporary Taiwan. The co-presidents' play is a genre of its own that has become a unique tradition of "A Night with TSA": it typically portrays the current (co-)presidents'

life in a comical way. In the 2003 production, the co-presidents' play recounted (somehow fictitiously) the co-presidents' friendship/rivalry since elementary school, and consequently sets the stage mostly in Tainan.

While the performances show a range of variety both in terms of the styles they draw from (for example, western street style dance, ballroom dance, and Chinese folk dance) and the settings (for example, Shanghai in the 30's, contemporary Taiwan, Tainan in the past ten years or so), the language used in the play and in the music of the dance performances displays much diversity as well. In the dance categories, the opening dance combines music sung in Taiwanese, Mandarin, and Japanese, as well as English. The music of folk dance employs the features of *huang mei diao*, a popular folk melody originated from Huang Mei and revived by Hong Kong film makers. The lyrics are predominantly in Mandarin, with one switch to English: "handsome."

Language use in the plays also displays a range of diversity. The actors in the sign language play, a performance genre including both spoken languages and choreographed Chinese sign language, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, speak only Mandarin, and often in a style that would be considered hyper standard in Taiwan. The creativity play, which sets its stage in contemporary Taiwan, uses mainstream Mandarin predominantly, but includes quite a few instances of stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, Taiwanese, and English. The plot of the co-presidents' play centers on the co-presidents' pre-college days in Tainan. The actors

use mainstream Taiwan Mandarin, stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, Taiwanese, and only rarely English.

The versatility of the performances and the diverse patterns of language use illustrate the multiple facets of TSA's self-presentation: there is not a single fixed image that TSA as a group wishes to perform. They are simultaneously college students, Tainanites, Taipei residents, actors, dancers, singers, inheritors of Chinese culture, Taiwanese, participants of local and translocal popular culture, and of course, members of TSA. Similarly, the role language plays in these performances is dynamic and complex. There is not a straightforward relationship between certain persona or images and any particular language or style of speech.

However, the diversity of the event and the multifaceted presentation of TSA do not mean that certain identities cannot be highlighted more than others in any particular context. In the following section, I investigate how the identity of TSA as a group is constructed in this performing context. I argue that such identity is mainly achieved through two means: the invocation of members' common background as Tainanites and acts of social distinction between TSA and other significant groups.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY OF TSA AS A GROUP

The first mean through which group solidarity is established at this event is the invocation of members' shared regional identity as Tainanites. A salient example is the music and live rap performance in the beginning section of the

opening dance. As has mentioned above, the opening dance is composed of sections of dance and music with different styles. The prelude to the dance is a four-measure musical introduction with a style known as *nakaxi*, a folk melody often associated with local, Taiwanese cabaret shows. After the short introduction, a dance of hip-hop style begins simultaneously with a change of musical tone to a rap song. The rap alternates between Taiwanese and Mandarin and is performed live by one of the dancers. The content of the rap is an introduction to the Tainan City and is transcribed and translated below. Following notations used earlier in this chapter, Taiwanese is underlined and in bold.

(17)

Gun tua ti to ui,	**Where do I live?**
Tainam chhi,	**Tainan City**
Goa to si ti chia chhusi,	**I was born here**
Lai Tainam (si chhi?)	**Play in the City (?)**
Gun tua ti to ui,	**Where do I live?**
Tainam chhi,	**Tainan City**
Goa to si ti chia toahan,	**I grew up here**
Lai Tainan (si chhi?)	**Play in the City (?)**

(repeated)

Gumingsi yi, ta zai Taiwan nanbu	As the term suggests, It is in southern Taiwan
Beiwei ershisan du	23 degree northern latitude
Dongjing yiliuling du	160 degree eastern longitude
Zai butong quyu zhong sanbu	Take a walk in the different districts
Dong xi nan bei zhong	East, West, South, North, Central
Hai you Anping Annan qu	And Anping and Annan districts
Chuanlian cheng zhengge da Tainan	Composed of the greater Tainan
Zheng ge fanhua de (XXX) qu	The whole prosperous (XXX) area
Buneng (XX) yitanjiujing	If you can't see it for yourself
Wo yao gaosu ni Tainan you duo meili	I wanna tell you how beautiful Tainan is
Jiu zai shizhengfu fujin	Right by the City Government
Dang wo quche dao Anping	When I drive to Anping
Na xiajuan de cucui waipi,	The fried shrimp roll is crispy
kim si si	**Golden in color**
Chi xia yi kou, dunshi wo de taiyangxue	Take a bite, suddenly there is lightening across my temples
Huaguo yi dao shandian	

“Tai hao chi la”	It is Yummy!
Peishang Anping douhua	With sweet tofu from Anping
Na kougan hao hua hao xiang	The texture is silky and tasty
Zhan zai Sicao qiao shang	Standing on the Sicao Bridge
Chui wanfeng kan yuanfang xiyang	Feeling the evening breeze and watching the sunset
Zai wanshang zheli keshi ge tiaoqing de hao difang	At night it is a good place to make out
Gun tua ti to ui,	**Where do I live?**
Tainam chhi,	**Tainan City**
Goa to si ti chia chhusi,	**I was born here**
Lai Tainam (si chhi?)	**Play in the City (?)**
Gun tua ti to ui,	**Where do I live?**
Tainam chhi,	**Tainan City**
Goa to si ti chia toahan,	**I grew up here**
Lai Tainan (si chhi?)	**Play in the City (?)**
(repeated)	

This rap song is the opening section of the opening dance and, hence, the very beginning of a series of performances in this evening event. The arrangement of such a song, named "Tainan city theme" in the programme, as the opening to "A Night with TSA" immediately highlights the regional identity that the TSA (or at least the production of this event) seeks to invoke among Tainanites and TSA members and the images TSA wishes to present to the non-member audience. While the content of the song is an introduction to the Tainan City, the language use also draws the audience's attention to the perceived difference in relative frequency of the use of Taiwanese and Mandarin in Taipei and Tainan areas. The rap begins with a stanza in Taiwanese that rhymes with the vowel [i]: *Gun tua ti to ui, Tainam chhi, Goa to si ti chia chhusi, Lai Tainam si chhi* "Where do I live? Tainan City. I was born here. Play in the City" and proceeds to the second stanza, which is a slight variation of the first one. The two stanzas are repeated again until the Mandarin middle section comes in, and once more serve as a refrain toward the end of this song.

What is of analytical interest to sociolinguists here is not only the use of Taiwanese in this particular context but also its conjunction with rap and the performance style of hip hop. In a university setting, in Myers-Scotton's term (1993), Mandarin is usually the unmarked language choice in the public domain. The use of Taiwanese in a public event such as "A Night with TSA" may not be as unusual as it was one or two decades ago, but may still be considered more or less

marked. To provide a contrastive example, I attended another similar performing event of a non-regionally based student organization held in the same semester. In contrast to the linguistic diversity in "A Night with TSA," the other event used predominantly Mandarin. As MX and several of other interviewees commented, the Taiwanese language, to a certain degree, is linked to their identity as Tainanites.

The content of the song and the use of Taiwanese jointly invoke audience's regional awareness and a sense of what TSA as a group is about. Nevertheless, the way Taiwanese is used appears to be quite innovative. In other words, different from the popularly articulated connection between Taiwanese and the traditional Han culture in Taiwan, on the one hand, and between the language and rurality and vulgarity, on the other hand, in the opening dance, the Taiwanese language and the portrait of Tainan City, best known as the historic capital of Taiwan, appear in a rap accompanied by dance of street style and male dancers with hip-hop-styled baggy costumes. Rap and hip hop as performance styles, most likely originated in the U.S., have certainly been commodified on a global scale. In the Taiwanese context, the meanings of rap and hip hop are repositioned and recontextualized and are mostly associated with trendiness, cosmopolitanness, and transgressive masculinity.

The social meanings of rap and hip hop as American popular styles and the exact process of bricolage (Hebdige, 1979)—the appropriation and recontextualization of these styles—in Taiwanese popular culture is beyond the scope of the current study. However, it is interesting to investigate how the elements

brought together in the opening dance interact with each other and contribute to the construction of a facet of a TSA identity in this particular context. Through its association with rap and hip hop in this performance, Taiwanese becomes more than the familiar language reminiscent of their hometown and Tainan ceases to be just a symbolic representation of the classical Han traditions. Instead, the language and the city are simultaneously connected with a sense of trendiness and globalness, both of which are characteristics that many TSA members would probably align themselves with.

Briggs and Bauman (1992) discuss the role of music in creating intertextual links between existing genres and the current discourse in performance contexts. In contrast to an often taken-for-granted assumption of genre as a classifying tool in fields such as anthropology and literary studies, Briggs and Bauman focuses on generic dynamism and argues that "[w]hen discourse is linked to a particular genre, the process by which it is produced and received is mediated through its relationship with prior discourse…the link is not made to isolated utterances, but to generalized or abstracted models of discourse production and reception" (p.147). Music serves as one of the various ways intertexual links to generic precedents and to different types of discourse can be established. Along this line, the rap and dance in "A Night with TSA" as performance genres create a dialogic relationship with the discourses on the symbolic status of Tainan City and the meanings of the Taiwanese language.

As Rampton (1999) suggests in his comments on the relationships between language and other expressive modalities in acts of styling,

> they together form an aesthetic ensemble designed to catch public attention in an already saturated semiotic marketplace. Objects like these often frustrate the attempt to identify elaborate meaning potential within the language system itself, and they instead direct our attention to the complex effects generated by much more contingent 'vertical' links across semiotic modes and levels. (p. 424)

Another salient example of the invocation of regional identity in the event is a scripted conversation between the two hosts that serve as the prelude to the last performance, co-presidents' play, which was set in Tainan, the members' common hometown. In this passage, the two hosts put on traditional Chinese robes and introduce the seven first-rank national historic sites in Tainan City, which, as noted, account for almost one-third of national historic sites of the same rank. While the costumes and the content seem to relate this passage to the classical, traditional aspects of Tainan, and the tone of speech is relatively formal in the beginning, the conversation takes a turn when the last historic site, *Yizai jin cheng* "Eternal Golden Castle," is introduced. One of the co-host describes it as "the Helm's Deep of Taiwan" and proceeds with *yao shi zhonggong qiangshouren lai de hua, yiding shou de zhu* "if the Chinese communists Uruk-hai invade us, we can surely hold." And the audience laughs.

This analogy, making use of the locations and characters from fiction and recent popular film trilogy *Lord of the Rings,* elicits loud laughter and applause from the audience for a number of reasons. First, the sudden change of tone from a formal to a joking manner and the connection between the historic importance of Tainan and the latest trends in entertainment create a sense of surprise. It is the incongruity and surprise relationship between the setup and the punch line that is the source of humor (Sherzer, 2002). Second, the understanding of the humor rests critically on the understanding of three dimensions of the joke: the Eternal Golden Castle as a historic fort, the relationships between Helm's Deep, Uruk-hai, and the main characters in *Lord of the Rings*, and the constant political and military tension between Taiwan and China. In other words, the three dimensions, to a certain degree, index Tainan-ness, trendiness (both in terms of the Taiwanese and the global contexts), and Taiwanese-ness, respectively. Therefore, this joke serves to highlight certain existing characteristics that many TSA members may identify themselves with, and in the meantime, reconstruct what it means to be a Tainanite, a participant of entertainment culture, a Taiwanese, and particularly in this context, a TSA member as a sum of all three (and possibly more).

The two examples illustrate how regional background is explicitly invoked to form a shared TSA identity. Furthermore, they show the dynamic nature of identity construction, specifically, how the meanings of Tainan and a Tainan identity come to be connected with trendiness and cosmopolitanness through a rap

song and a joke in reference to a film trilogy that has received popularity worldwide. In addition to the invocation of a shared regional background, this event also seeks to establish group solidarity through a second strategy: acts of social distinction from other significant groups, to which I now turn.

As has been discussed in the case study of MX's interview, the establishment of a shared identity often requires a sense of an Other who are perceived as socially oppositional. Somehow ironically, to be socially constituted as different also requires certain degree of sameness serving as the backdrop against which the construction of a contrast is possible (c.f. Bucholtz & Hall, 2004a; Eckert, 2000). Like MX, who compares and contrasts TSA with other regionally based alumni associations on campus, the hosts of "A Night with TSA" also articulate their distinctions and jokingly put down those significant Others in a number of occasions. These comments often draw much laughter and applause from the audience, which seems to indicate the success of such acts of social distinction in the construction of group solidarity.

A salient example occurs in the hosts' connecting passage between the sign language play and the creativity play, although the content of this passage does not seem to relate to the preceding and following performances in any particular ways. In this passage, the two hosts perform a comic show, which can be perceived as a modified version of a traditional Chinese performance genre, *shuanghua*. In this performance, one host (host A) stands right in front of the other (host B), and places

his arms behind his back so that the audience cannot see them. Host B hides himself completely behind host A, but shows his arms as if they are host A's. The visual effect is such that the pair would look as if they were one single person. The trick of this performance is the coordination between A's speech and facial expressions, B's hand gestures, and A's lower body movement, though to a lesser degree. Although it is a two-man show, the speech resembles a monologue, since it is the seeming unity that characterizes such a genre.

This passage began with host A reciting parts of two well-known classical Chinese poems and expressing how they inspired him to write a poem of his own. This "poem" is actually a list of the better-known regionally based alumni associations, which of course rhyme with each other, since they all end with the same word *hui* "association." While the content itself seems quite neutral, it is through the suprasegmental features, such as pitch, volume, and syllable length, and the accompanying gestures, such as thumbs up, little fingers up, or thumbs down that evaluation toward these associations is conveyed. As is shown in the excerpt, while TSA is evaluated positively, the other alumni associations are not.

(18)

Wei le zengjin ziji de xueshu qixi,	To increase my own intellectuality,
Pingchang wo haihui du yixie gu ren de	I read classical poetry during leisure

shi.	time.
“Zhao ci bo di cai yun jian	(Reciting two famous poems)
Qian li jiang ling yi ri huan”	
“Gu su cheng wai han shan si	
Ye ban zhong sheng dao ke chuan”	
Du le zhe ji shou shi yihou,	After reading these poems,
Wo ye youganerfa de xie le ji shou.	I am inspired to write a few myself
“Taiwan daxue Nanyouhui	“NTU Tainan Student Association (with right thumb up)
Taiwan daxue Zhongyouhui	NTU Taichung Student Association (with dropping volume and left little finger up)
Taiwan daxue Chengjinghui	NTU Chengjing Association (with both little fingers up)
Taiwan daxue Xiongyouhui.”	NTU Kaohsiung Student Association (with a lower pitch at the end and thumbs and index fingers of both hands pointing down)

While TSA was given a positive right thumb up in the beginning phrase, the other alumni associations are contrastively given little fingers or fingers down and their names were read with a lower, breathier voice. The audience laughed and applauded, once again showing that the message that TSA is uniquely different from and better than their rivals was successfully transmitted and well received by the audience. Similar verbal acts of social distinction occurred several times throughout the event. These acts appear to be a conscious strategy on the part of the TSA production to elicit group solidarity, and judging from the responding applause and laughters, they served their purpose well.

In the above analysis, I have shown that there is no single dimension of a TSA identity—their self-presentations are multifaceted and complex identities are invoked as the program proceeds from one performance style to another and as the patterns of language use change at the levels of code choice, style shifting in one single language, suprasegmental features, and non-verbal gestures. However, the recognition of the multifaceted self-presentations does not necessarily mean that the TSA members do not regard themselves as a coherent group brought together based on certain shared properties. In this particular performance context, group solidarity and a TSA identity are mainly constructed through two means: the emphasis on their shared regional background and acts of social distinction from other regionally based alumni associations.

Although the use of Taiwanese in the opening dance (as well as the relative frequent use of Taiwanese throughout the event in a university setting) and the introduction of national historic sites in Tainan link the TSA to the two highly salient facets of their hometown perceived by Tainanites themselves and Taiwanese in general, TSA members, however, are not just any Tainanites. They are young Tainanites who reside in Taipei and attend a highly prestigious university in Taiwan. They are simultaneously the inheritors of Tainan's glorious past and young, trendy intellectuals. Hence, the Taiwanese language is used in a rap, and the historic relic gets to be linked to a joke that requires knowledge both in entertainment business and in the political stalemate between Taiwan and China. As social agents, the TSA members make use of available resources at a variety of levels to construct their multiple identities and carve out a social landscape of their own.

The reposition and recontextualization of familiar language (such as Taiwanese) and discourse on the symbolic status of Tainan, on the one hand, and of the modern music style (such as rap) and knowledge in popular culture, on the other hand, may illustrate why the event is considered a huge success and explain the numerous raving comments after the event posted on TSA's electronic bulletin board. While many felt that Tainan and TSA were well represented in the event, it is perhaps also true to say that the preparation and the event itself further shaped many members' perspectives about what is means to be a Tainanite, a college student, a Taiwanese, a participant in classical and popular culture, and most importantly,

what it means to be a TSA member. Similar to what Coupland (2001) suggests in his analysis of two hosts' creative entextualizations of Welshness in a radio show, we may say that the TSA members do not seek to be "guardians of culture" so much as "facilitators of cultural reassessment," to use Coupland's terms. Through the binding of the traditional and the present and the occurring, the TSA members reinterpret and, to a certain degree, (re)authenticate their Tainan-ness as well as their multiple identities. It is perhaps this (re)authenticating process that many members find satisfying and solidary, as shown by MX's comments in the earlier discussion and by members' overwhelmingly enthusiastic reactions to this event.

LANGUAGE STYLING IN TWO PLAYS

The above analysis focuses primarily on how a TSA identity is constructed through discursive practices and subsidiary on whether language use and other cultural resources play a role in those moments of negotiation and presentation of a shared identity. This section, different from the previous one, takes practices of language styling as center of investigation. Specifically, I examine language styling in two plays—one stylizing Beijing Mandarin and the other Taiwanese-accented Mandarin—and the comical effects produced either unintentionally or intentionally in those styling practices.

SIGN LANGUAGE PLAY

As has been mentioned, the plot of the sign language play centered on a tragic love story between a cabaret singer and a patriotic youngster in Shanghai in the 30's. The crew and actors of the play appeared to attempt to give as vivid a portrait of that era as possible through the choice of music, costume, graceful body movement, and language use. Language use in this play was maximally different from other plays in this event in that the actors generally adopted a style of Mandarin that would be considered hyper-standard in Taiwan. Retroflex consonants, a salient social maker in the Taiwanese context, tended to be enunciated so clearly that it seemed apparent that the actors paid much attention to how they sounded in this play.

The play began with a narration that provided the historical context of the story, which is presented in excerpt (19) below. Retroflex consonants are coded with either (0) or (1) right below. Following Coupland's notation (1985), which is in line with procedures established by Labov (1972a), the number (0) represents the standard retroflex realization while (1) indicates anything else.

(19)

min	guo	er	shi	liu	nian	qi	yue	qi	ri
		(0)	(0)						(0)
kang	ri	kai	shi						
	(0)		(0)						

quan	zhong (0)	guo	xian	ru (0)	le	zui	jian	ku	de		
yu	xie	fen	zhan (0)								
zai	shang (0)	hai	zhe (0)	ge							
ge	wu	sheng (0)	ping	de	hua	hua	shi (0)	jie	li		
wang	guo	hen	de	yin	jing	si	hu	shang (0)	wei	long	zhao (0)

On July the Seventh, 1937, the war with Japan began. The whole of China was involved in fierce battles. In the materialistic world of Shanghai, however, the sentiment of a subjugated nation had not sunk in.

As the excerpt shows, all of the retroflex consonants in the beginning narration are fully realized. The highly standard style of speech, along with the slow, melodic music somehow created a classical, nostalgic tone for the play. The standard style of Mandarin was also maintained when the actresses who played YanHong, the cabaret singer, and her maid entered the scene and began a prayer and a short dialogue. The overall nostalgic, graceful atmosphere that the play sought to generate was carried out quite successfully until shortly after the entrance of

CongYun, the hero and a patriotic young man from a wealthy family. The actor began with a prayer for peace, and in his second sentence in the prayer, he de-retroflexed the syllable initial consonant *sh* and merged syllable-final [ŋ] with [n]. The audience bursts into laughter at this point. The following excerpt shows the variation of retroflex in the beginning section of this play that immediately follows the narration.

(20)

YH: (prays to a god in a temple)

Huang	tian	zai	shang	,					
			(0)						
yuan	nin	neng	bao	you	tian	xia	cang	sheng	.
								(0)	
rang	kang	zhan	neng	zao	ri	jie	shu.		
(0)		(0)					(0)		

God on high, please protect those who live in the world, and end the war soon.

(YH then takes a walk around the temple)

Maid:	xiao	jie,	wo	men	chu	lai	zhe	me	jiu	le,
					(0)		(0)			

zai bu hui qu,

pa ma ma hui sheng qi.
(0)

Miss, we've been out for a long time. If we don't go back soon, Mama (the owner of the cabaret club) will be mad.

YH: ji shen me.
(0)
That's alright.

(CY enters and prays in the temple)

CY: huang tian zai shang,
(0)

yuan nin lian min tian xia cang sheng,
(1)
(audience laughs)

rang zhan zheng zao ri jie shu.
(0) (1) (1) (0)

ye yuan nin neng gou bao you Cong Yun

zai zhan chang shang ke yi shun li de
(0) (1) (0)

gan pao ri ben gui zi.
(0)

God on high, please have mercy on those who live in the world and end the war soon. Please also watch over me when I fight in the battlefield against the Japanese devils.

As the above excerpts show, the retroflex consonants in both the beginning narration and the actresses' dialogue showed very little variation until the hero entered the scene and produced a quite noticeable non-standard variant. This non-standard realization was saliently different from the style of the preceding speech such that an unexpected comical effect was created right at this point.

Why did the audience find the non-standard realization of retroflex particularly funny in this play? Before an adequate response to this question can be provided, it is perhaps necessary to ask another question: How did retroflex consonants get to be connected with Shanghai in the 30's in this performance context? How was such a link established?

As mentioned earlier, retroflexion is perhaps the most salient social marker in the Taiwanese context. The historical development of language attitudes toward retroflexion is beyond the scope of this study, but it is likely that the lack of retroflexion in Taiwanese and the difficulty Taiwanese people encountered in the acquisition of retroflex consonants were observed early on when the Mandarin movement was launched in the 40's. Because there are four retroflex consonants,

their relative frequent occurrences also rendered them more salient than many other variables.

The lack of retroflexion when speaking Mandarin thus came to indicate a trace of the Taiwanese language. The marginalization of Taiwanese under the past language policies gradually pushed Taiwanese out of the public domain and turned it into a language of family and private settings. Along this line, Mandarin with a trace of Taiwanese, most noticeably realized through de-retroflexion, also came to be associated with a sense of localness and a lack of education. It is recognized as oppositional to a "purer," pan-Chinese style of Mandarin that does not carry a regional connotation.

It is perhaps the perceived lack of a particular accent and the concomitant regional associations that link clear retroflexion with Shanghai in the 30's, a space and time distinctively different from the local Taiwanese context. It is perhaps the sense of educatedness and refinement connected with a "purer" use of Mandarin that motivated the hyper-realization of retroflexion in a play that sought to recapture a romanticized, nostalgic past. Interpretations can be infinite, and as Ahearn suggests, (2001), it is perhaps more useful to shift focus away from searching for definite interpretations, instead concentrating on looking for constraints on possible meanings that might emerge from an event. Along this line, the unintentional comical effect produced out of the actor's non-standard pronunciation of a retroflex syllable-initial consonant (as well as the syllable final merger of [ŋ] to [n] in the

same syllable) may serve as a fruitful locus to investigate meaning constraint. After all, the comical effect was produced because the actor's style of speech did not fit—it clashed with the play's theatrical frame and the audience's expectation.

In this light, we may say that the clear retroflex realization in this play is an attempt to articulate a style whose social meaning is different from and probably oppositional to what Taiwanese-accented Mandarin symbolizes. As mentioned earlier, clear realization of retroflex in this hyper standard style, in contrast to lack of retroflex in Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, may indicate a Mandarin with no definable regional or social features that are stigmatized in the broader Taiwanese society and the current performance context. Indeed, while it is likely to link retroflexion with the Beijing-based *putonghua* in China, the actors did not seem to seek to produce the stereotypical linguistic features associated with a Mainland Chinese accent. Such styling would include not only realization of retroflex consonants, but also tone neutralization and a wider-ranged intonation contour, as performed by several of my interviewees.

In the above analysis, I have shown that the actors in the play generally sought to create a style that could be linked with a remote space and time and is free from regional connotations salient in the Taiwanese context, such as a local Taiwanese or a Mainland Chinese accents. The implicit language ideology behind such acts of language styling was manifested especially clearly when one actor does not to comply with the style established by the narrators and other actors and

produced an unexpected and likely unintended comical moment. It is at those style-clashing moments that we as audience and researchers become highly aware of the double identities of the actor and the role, on the one hand, and the multiple voicing inherent in each style of speech, on the other hand (Bakhtin, 1981).

While the analysis of the sign language play discusses the role of language styling in the creation of a setting distant in time and space and the unexpected comical moment when the imagined past was juxtaposed with the contemporary, local Taiwanese style, the following analysis of the co-presidents' play focuses on another type of language styling—the intentional and comical stylization of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin in the portrait of a commonly known figure in TSA.

CO-PRESIDENTS' PLAY

The co-presidents' play is a unique genre in "A Night with TSA." At least in recent years, each annual production includes a play at the end of the program that comically portrays aspects of the (co)-presidents' life. Members are highly aware of its uniqueness, as evidenced by some of my interviewees' explicit comment on the co-presidents' play as one major feature that sets "A Night with TSA" apart from other similar performance and social events on campus.

This show, to a significant extent, serves to construct and increase group solidarity among TSA members. Since the theme of the play centers on the co-

presidents' life, one has to know the co-presidents, TSA members' general comments on them, elementary and high school life in Tainan, college life at NTU, and sometimes even the highlights from previous productions' co-presidents' plays to understand the humor. It may not be an accident that this show is placed almost always as the last in the event: it serves to increase a sense of belongingness and to end the event as the solidarity reaches a climax.

The 2003 production of co-presidents' play presented a story about the friendship and rivalry since elementary school between the two co-presidents. The story was largely fictional, although the background information about the schools and locations mentioned in the play was truthful. Language use in this play was quite diverse. While most of the characters were the co-presidents' peers and spoke mainstream Taiwan Mandarin, one of the co-presidents (who is also the co-host of the event) was playfully portrayed as a Taiwanese-accented Mandarin speaker. Members from the older generation, in contrast, were depicted differently in terms of their linguistic repertoires. The mother of the other co-president was portrayed as a Taiwanese dominant speaker who spoke Mandarin only occasionally and with an accent. The generational difference in language use hinted at this play corresponds to many of my interviewees' comments that age is an important factor in their choice of language in Tainan.

What I would like to focus on in the following discussion is language stylization of a female TSA member who played one of the co-presidents. Her

performance was considered especially hilarious and drew the most applause and cheer from the audience among all the actors in the play. As a female, she played the male role of the co-president playfully and convincingly. While the co-president she played has sometimes made the impression as someone with a sense of localness (as commented by one of my interviewees), the actress successfully exaggerated this aspect of his perceived disposition by giving him a significant Taiwanese accent when speaking Mandarin and by the masculine and somehow unrefined way she carried herself on the stage.

The common phonological features the actress employed in the stylization are listed below. The first three overlap with features discussed in previous sections:

(1) De-retroflexion of retroflex consonants: retroflex consonants [tʂ], [tʂ^{h}], [ʂ], [z̩] are pronounced as [ts], [ts^{h}], [s], [z].

(2) Monothongization of [ou]

(3) The merge of [ŋ] with [n]

(4) Monothongization of [ei]: [ei] is pronounced as [e] or [ɛ]

(5) A general tendency toward vowel lowering: for example, ‘wait’ [d**ə**ŋ] is pronounced as [d**a**ŋ]

The general tendency toward vowel lowering seems to correspond to comments made by several of my interviewees that further south, people tend to vocalize further back or from a lower position, in their own terms.

The sources of humor of such stylization are multiple. There are three major elements in these acts of stylization: the co-president as the target of playful imitation, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin as the linguistic realization of the imitation, and the actress as the performer of the stylization. If we focus only on the former two, the co-president and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, it is interesting to note that the stylization of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin in the portrait of the co-president is itself a symbolic act rather than a factual presentation, given that the co-president does not have any more particularly noticeable Taiwanese accent in his Mandarin than most of his peers. The connection seems to be made through his higher frequency of Taiwanese in daily usage with his peers and his straightforward and at times bold personality, both of which are stereotypically linked with the South as a region, (which is discussed in previous sections) and a sense of local Taiwanese-ness.

Therefore, it is the sense of localness, rather than the co-president's Mandarin phonology, that the actress and her use of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin stylized. The relationship between the co-president and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is metaphorical and brings into play stereotyped semiotic and ideological values associated with a loosely defined yet socially significant group that the co-president and the audience could neither totally identify with as an ingroup nor completely an outgroup. One major source of humor thus comes from the recognition of such complexity: the symbolic connection between the co-president,

a well-known figure in TSA, and the various social meanings of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin (such as its regional connotation, its link to positive qualities such as congeniality and negative ones such as backwardness, its oppositional role to what Mandarin represents, etc.). In other words, getting the humor requires understanding the social and symbolic complexities involved in the situated linguistic realization of the comical exaggeration of certain aspects of the co-president's personality traits. The understanding of the humor further generates a stronger sense of group solidarity—after all, it requires knowledge on multiple levels as local as the immediate performance context in the event and as symbolic as the social meanings attached to Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and the South as a region in the broader Taiwanese context to appreciate the playfulness in those performances.

Adding the performer to the discussion generates another layer of complexity. There is one apparent reason why the actress's performance drew particularly much attention in the play, as evidenced by the audience's sizzling whisper when she first came on stage and delivered her lines and the loud applause afterwards: as a female, she played a male role with a linguistic style often associated with a lack of refinement and, to a certain degree, masculinity. The language ideologies foregrounding such an association were suddenly highlighted in her cross-gender performance. In other words, the audience was made aware of how these interpretations are gendered. The next chapter on language and gender further

discusses her performance and gendered language ideologies in Taiwan. For the purpose of current discussion, it is interesting to note that the performer as a female produced another source of humor and further complicated the issues of multiple voicing (Bakhtin, 1981) in the acts of language stylization in this play.

4.4.2 C.Y. Chorus: 30th Annual Family Concert

"Family Concert," similar to "A Night with TSA," is an annual performing event that showcases the talents of members of C.Y. Chorus. As mentioned earlier, events like these are opportunities to increase group solidarity, on the one hand, and to present a desirable image of the chorus to both the members and non-member audience, on the other hand. While the TSA largely focused on a shared regional background and social distinctions from other alumni associations in the construction of a TSA identity, the C.Y. Chorus, instead, emphasized the history of the chorus by sharing old photos and highlights from past editions of the chorus' newsletters. The performances were also more homogeneous and were entirely musical, whether it be choral singing, solo performances, piano duos, or a percussion group. Although the member composition of the C.Y. chorus is also regionally based, there was no explicit reference to a shared identity as Taipei-ans or as Jian-Bei alumni.

I believe that the lack of regional reference can be interpreted in two ways. First, in this context (as well as many others), the C.Y. chorus is first and foremost a

chorus. Different from TSA, whose only criterion of membership is a shared regional background, the chorus requires the members to have certain musical abilities, and the major activities that the chorus engages as a group are choral rehearsals and performances. The significance of a shared regional identity is even more trivialized since the members' are Taipei-ans who live in Taipei. While a Taipei identity might be invoked in another setting (such as YJ's articulated comments on her identification with Taipei), it remains implicit in the current context. The contrast between a lack of reference to a shared regional background in the chorus and the highlight of a Tainan identity in TSA illustrates that the importance of situatedness in the investigation of identity construction. Identity is fluid and multiple; each interactional moment has its own relevant identity frames.

Language use in the "Family Concert" was also quite diverse. While mainstream Taiwan Mandarin remained the dominant language, code-switching to Taiwanese and English both occurred. However, the extent to which code-switching occurred appeared to show some differences from that in "A Night with TSA," especially regarding Taiwanese. The code-switched segments in Taiwanese tended to be shorter and on the level of single lexical items or phrases. This may be related to the generally more limited competence of the Taiwanese language among the chorus members. Language stylization, specifically, stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, was also employed in this event to generate comical effects, although the stylized performances in this occasion did not seem to be explicitly connected to an

awareness of a shared regional background as in "A Night with TSA." For future study, it would be interesting to examine and compare the linguistic features employed in stylized practices between both groups of students and the similar or different ways stylization is perceived and interpreted in terms of their communicative functions and effects across groups.

4.5 The North and the South Revisited

The above analyses on media discourse, interview reports, and social and linguistic practices on the performance contexts show that the North and the South as social constructs and their relationships to linguistic varieties such as Mandarin, Taiwanese, English, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, Mandarin-accented Taiwanese, etc. are psychologically real to many contemporary Taiwanese people. As discussed earlier in this chapter, popular as the discourse on the contrast between the North and the South is, the exact meanings of the North and the South are quite slippery. After the analyses of local articulations of these contrasts, it seems useful at this point to revisit the popular concepts of the North and the South, which, I believe, play an important role in the shaping of language ideologies in Taiwan.

Although the labels the North and the South may have a variety of local meanings in different contexts, in the popular usages, they often refer to Taipei metropolitan area and its oppositions. The dichotomy of the North and the South by and large takes Taipei as the most important reference. Very often the comparison

and contrast between Taipei metropolitan area and the rest of Taiwan and its variations, such as the differences between urban and rural areas are disguised under the discourses of North/South differences.

Such a Taipei-centered point of view is prevalent both in the dominant and resistant ideologies concerning regional development in Taiwan. As has been mentioned, the uneven distribution of cultural, symbolic, and material resources and Taipei's privileged status established by the past development policies are recognized both by Taipei-ans and non-Taipei-ans. Taipei-ans are often criticized as viewing themselves as the representative of Taiwan and are ignorant of the world outside of Taipei in the Taiwanese context. The fact that the majority of media are based in Taipei also plays a role in the spreading of Taipei-centered perspectives. Resistance to such a perspective is voiced more and more in contemporary Taiwan and takes a variety of forms. However, such discourses often participate in the dichotomizing of the North and the South as Taipei and non-Taipei, emphasizing the uniqueness of the South by highlighting oppositions between the two socially constructed locales.

The danger of such dichotomization is its effect in homogenizing the South (and the North as well, yet to a lesser degree) on the discursive level, a semiotic process identified by Irvine and Gal (2000) as *erasure*. While there are perhaps locations considered more typical South, the area the term "the South" may cover can be as geographically vast as anywhere in western Taiwan outside of Taipei,

depending on the user's stance toward such a term. The degree of urbanization, labor structure, demographic features, and language use in those areas can be quite diverse. Such diversity is often overlooked when "South" as a general label is constructed as the opposite of Taipei, whether from a Taipei-centered perspective or a resisting point of view. The construction of opposition is bi-directional: in a reverse direction, contrastive social meanings are given to "Taipei" or "the North" as a general term, highlighting their difference from the South. Hence, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, "the North" comes to be associated with positive qualities such as development and progress, urban life style, cosmopolitanism, cultural sophistication, and negative qualities such as cold and shrewd personalities, and connections with colonizing powers, while "the South" comes to be linked to positive characteristics such as straightforward and undaunted personality traits, authentic representation of Han culture in Taiwan, originality, and negative ones such as rurality, backwardness, confined localness, etc.

I believe that the dichotomization of the North and the South plays a significant role in the language ideologies prevalent in Taiwan. In the next section, I examine some of the possible ways that Mandarin and Taiwanese come to index a variety of contrastive social meanings, drawing particularly on Ochs' theory of indexicality (1992).

4.6 Language Ideologies: Mandarin, Taiwanese, and Their Social Meanings

Mandarin and Taiwanese, although used side by side by many Taiwanese people in their daily life, carry quite different and sometimes even oppositional social meanings. In this section, I investigate some of the possible ways these complex meanings are constructed, and the role the discourse of North/South contrast plays in those meaning-making processes in light of the previous discussions in this chapter. My goal here is not to tease out all the possible social meanings of the two languages, since such meanings are infinite and constantly emerge in local contexts and linguistic practices. Rather, I seek to illuminate the processes through which these languages come to index certain meanings and, in turn, become semiotic resources available to exercise individual agency. Language is ultimately a social phenomenon. As is shown in the following discussion, the investigation of the indexical meanings of Mandarin and Taiwanese is inevitably linked to social groupings such as regions (e.g. the North or the South) and ethnicities (e.g. Mainlanders and Local Taiwanese).

The historical development and language policies in Taiwan have had and continue to have a strong impact on the different distribution of Mandarin and Taiwanese. One major venue for the Mandarin-only policy was through educational settings. Mandarin ability was also required in governmental institutions, especially among higher-rank officers in the Central Government, which is located in Taipei. An additional factor influencing the distribution of Mandarin and Taiwanese

concerns the Mainlander group. Although heterogeneous in its composition, unlike local Taiwanese people who encountered language contact with Mandarin only after the Second World War, Mainlanders tended to have acquired the language earlier and generally had a better command of Mandarin than local Taiwanese people. The majority of the Mainlander population relocated in urban areas, mostly in Taipei. All these factors contribute to Taipei's distinctive language environment from other areas in Taiwan.

Taiwanese, in contrast, was gradually pushed into family and private settings under the Mandarin-only movement. However, in most parts of southern Taiwan, especially in rural areas with its more homogeneous Southern Min population, Taiwanese remains the most frequently used language in daily interaction and in local institutions such as police stations, banks, etc.

The differential distribution of Mandarin and Taiwanese plays a significant role in the construction of the ideological linkage between the two languages and their respective social meanings. In light of Ochs' theory of indexicality, we may say that Mandarin is directly linked to educational and institutional settings, urban areas, and the Taipei metropolitan area. It is also recognized as the national language of Taiwan, the only language with legitimate status for an extended period of time, the lingua franca in transnational Chinese communities, and the national language of China. Through these settings and locales and the role Mandarin plays in the Taiwanese and the broader transnational Chinese contexts, Mandarin is

further connected with the social meanings associated with these locales and roles. The direct and indirect indexicalities of Mandarin are schematized in figure 6. Following Ochs' notations, arrows refer to direct indexical relations while arrows with dotted lines indicate constitutive, indirect indexical relations.

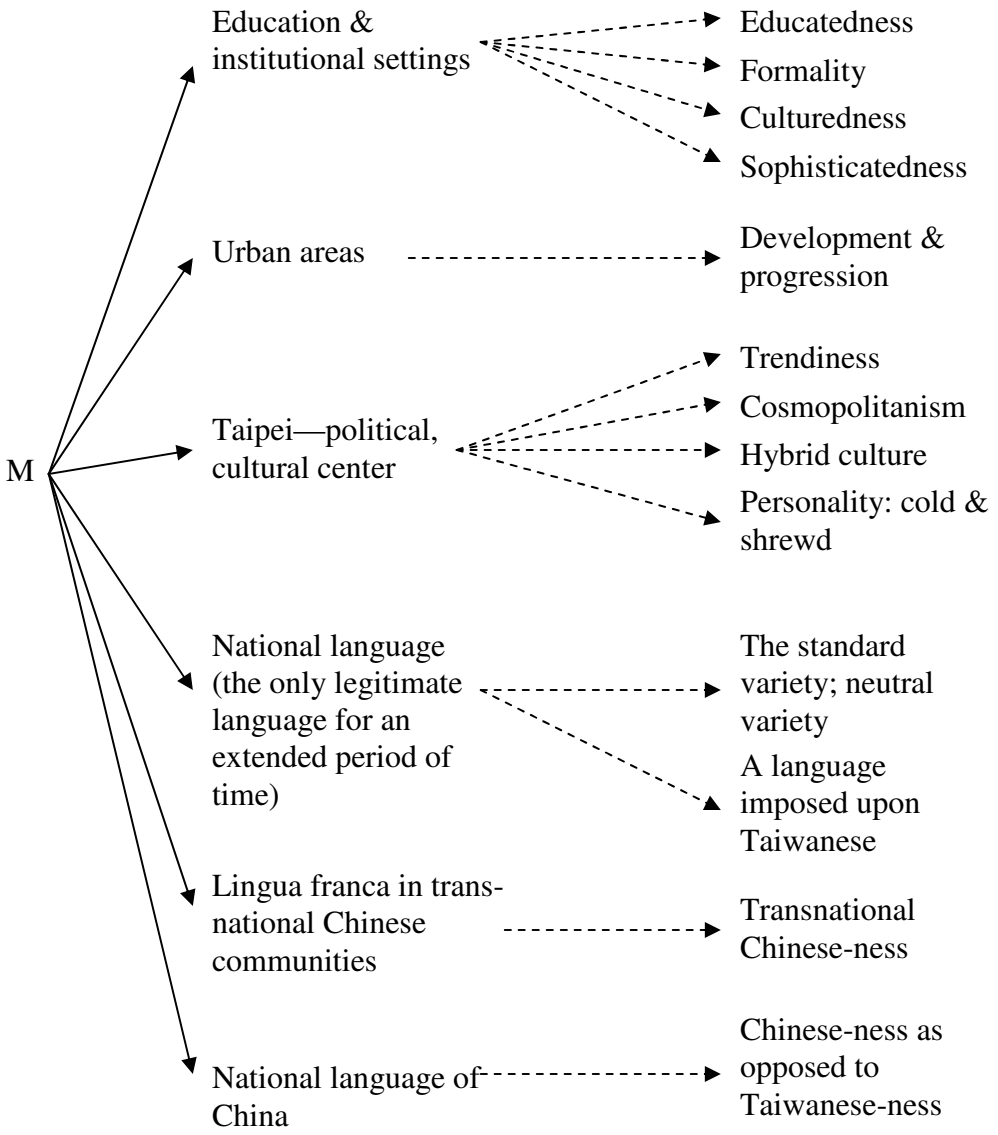

Figure 6. The indexical processes of meaning-making of Mandarin

Taiwanese receives its indexical meanings in much the same way. It is first linked to family and private settings, rural areas, South (which contains a larger

Southern Min population), and the mother tongue of the early Han settlers and further to congeniality, ingroup solidarity, backwardness, straightforwardness, boldness, authentic Taiwanese-ness, etc, as shown in figure 7.

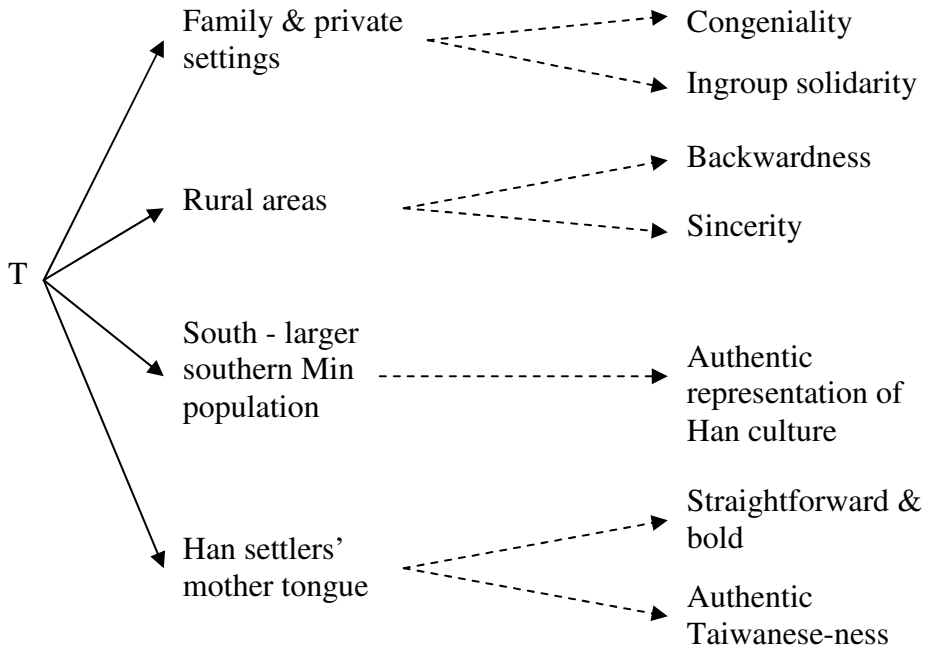

Figure 7. Indexical processes of meaning-making of Taiwanese

Although the indexical meaning-making processes of Mandarin and Taiwanese are presented in two separate figures, they are not independent of each

other. The discourse on regional contrast between the North and the South participates in these indexical processes, and serves as an illustration of how Mandarin and Taiwanese are given oppositional meanings through direct and indirect indexicalities. As mentioned above, the North and the South come to be constructed in many contexts as carrying oppositional meanings. In other words, the social meanings attached to one end of the dichotomy sometimes only emerge as the opposition of the other. Mandarin and Taiwanese, through their respective links to Taipei/the North and South, are rendered contrastive meanings associated with these socially constructed spaces. Figure 8 illustrates the mutually constitutive relationship between the indexical processes of Mandarin and Taiwanese. A more complete picture of meaning-making of Mandarin and Taiwanese should include the processes demonstrated in Figure 6, 7, and 8 and is presented three-dimensionally in Figure 9.

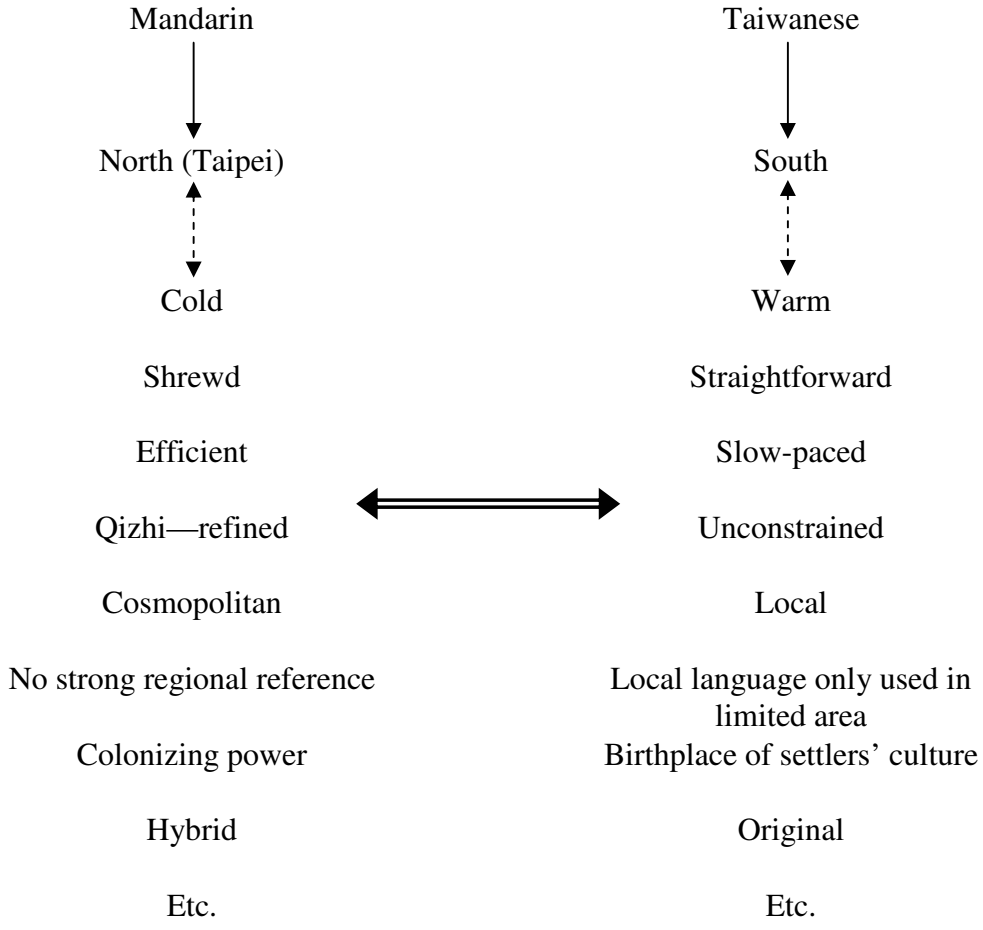

Figure 8. The interactions and oppositional constructions between two indexical processes.

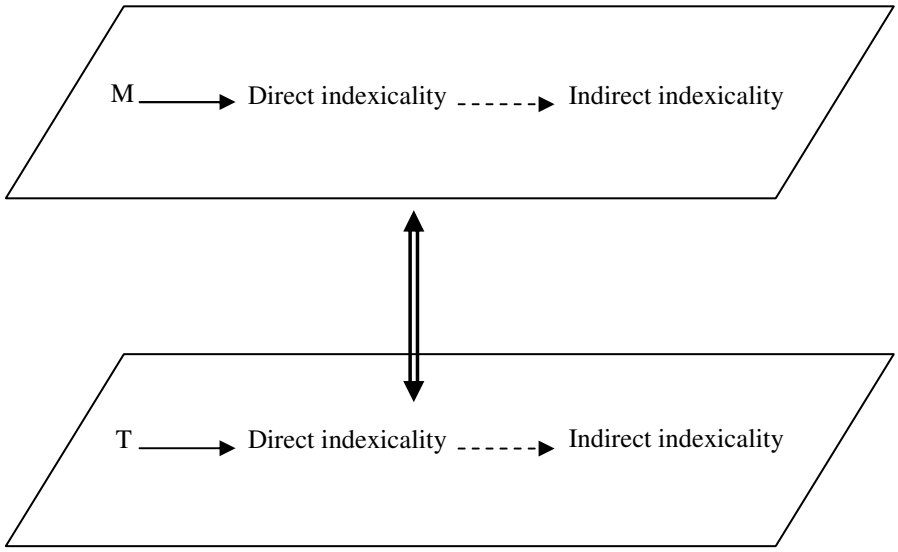

Figure 9. A 3-dimensional illustration of the indexical meaning-making processes of Mandarin and Taiwanese.

These figures sketch some of the ways Mandarin and Taiwanese are rendered meaningful through indexical processes in the Taiwanese context. As is shown in the figures, the social meanings attached to a particular language can be very diverse and even contradictory at times. For example, Mandarin is recognized as a neutral language that does not carry any regional reference in some contexts,

but may be linked to a sense of Chinese-ness, constructed as the opposition of Taiwanese-ness in other interactional moments. The indexical recursivity of language as a sign make it possible to generate a wide range of meanings that may even contradict with each other in different contexts. However, it is exactly through such contradiction and constant emergence of new meanings that individual agency can be called into play, that language becomes a semiotic resource for speakers as social agents to present themselves, to construct their identities, to align themselves with a particular stance, and to accomplish a variety of communicative goals.

4. 7 Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter investigates the discursive and linguistic means through which the North and the South and Taipei and Tainan—often considered representative of the North and the South—are constructed as cultural places distinctive from each other. It also examines how individual and group identities are simultaneously constituted and reinterpreted through these processes of rendering particular locations socially meaning. Beginning with a general discussion on the concept of region in sociolinguistics, anthropology, and cultural geography and the historical development of the North and the South as two socially constructed places, the beginning sections of this chapter seek to provide scholarly and socio-historical frameworks that locate the following discussions on media discourse, general comments in the 44 interviews, case studies of two interviews, and two performance

events in two regionally based alumni associations at NTU. While the participants' discursive practices and language attitudes concerning region are the primary focus of investigation in this chapter, micro-analyses of language use, such as instances of code-switching, phonological variation, and language choice in conjunction with non-linguistic expressive modalities, are also conducted to illustrate how discursive and linguistic practices are often intricately interwoven and how they simultaneously reflect, react to, and reconfigure the discourse(s) on regional contrast in Taiwan.

One of the most important enduring themes in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology concerns the contextualized analysis of issues of structure and agency in language use. Over a decade ago, Bauman and Sherzer (1989) argued that the "dynamic interplay between the social, conventional, ready-made in social life and the individual, creative, and emergent qualities of human existence…[is now] a key problem demand[ing] a great deal of more work" (p.19). This chapter is structured in a way that wishes to contribute to such a conversation. The analysis begins with the social, historical, political, and economic factors participating in the emergence of discourse on regional contrast, addressing the larger social structure that conditions individual's ideologies regarding language and regional differences. The discussion of the media's treatment of this issue illustrates its role as societal mediator which simultaneously reflects and shapes the perspectives of the general public. The following analysis of the general trends in interview reports across all

four student organizations provides an overview of students' attitudes in the more immediate, local context under which the case studies and performance events can be investigated. Throughout the chapter, the analyses move from ones that address discourse in the societal level to ones that focus on individual creativity in voicing regional awareness and in constructing related identities.

With several types of data and different analytical focus, I have sought to show how discourse(s) of regional differences manifests itself/themselves in a range of different interactions and how these interactions are interconnected. The concept of intertextuality raised by Bakhtin (1986) and further elaborated by Briggs and Bauman (1992) may be useful for current discussion. While Bakhtin suggests literary words as intersections of textual surfaces (to use Kristeva's term (1980)) loaded with meanings from other writings, Briggs and Bauman extend Bahktin's dialogic view to the study of genre and discourse in performance contexts. To them, intertextual links can be established beyond the domain of words or isolated utterances to generalized or abstracted models of discourse production and reception.

The concept of intertextuality enables us to see the different types of interactions analyzed in this chapter as interconnected through discourse(s) on regional differences. The media reports, comments made in the interviews, and the performance events are not interactions isolated from each other. Like literary words or genres, each reference to the cultural differences in the North and the South is in

a dialogic relationship with the speaker, the addressee(s), and the discourse(s) on region circulating in the society, be it more local and immediate as among the college students or more widespread at the larger society as the media discourse and the references to historical development scattered around a variety of forms of talk.

The discourse on regional contrast is gaining more salience and is given a linguistic content. Since the presidential election in 2000, which showed a split in voting patterns in northern and southern Taiwan, the phrase *bei lan nan lü*, literally "North blue South green" has become a widespread usage in academia, media, political campaigns, and daily interactions. Variations on this phrase and its structure can also be observed, such as *bei wang nan shuai* "North prosperous South declined" as part of a title in a magazine article on uneven distribution of material resources in Taiwan (Zeng, 2000). While such a phrasal structure has long been available in Mandarin and Taiwanese, its widespread usage is nevertheless a more recent phenomenon. The extractable nature of this phrase makes it possible to participate in the process of entextualization—defined by Bauman and Briggs (1990) as "the process of rendering discourse extractable, of making a stretch of linguistic production into a unit—a text—that can be lifted out of its interactional setting" (p.73). In other words, the phrasal structure of *bei (adjective) nan (adjective)* makes the discourse on region extractable from its immediate interactional settings and transposable in a wide range of contexts, highlighting

regional contrast and reducing its complexity to something reminiscent of a cloze test in a language class.

While language plays a part in the emergence of discourse on regional difference, such a discourse(s) also has a significant impact on language ideologies in Taiwan. As shown in the previous section, Mandarin and Taiwanese acquire their respective social meanings through indexical processes, and the perceived differences associated with the North and the South play a vital role in constructing certain aspects of Mandarin and Taiwanese as oppositional. While language (in a variety of levels, such as code choice, phonology, lexical items, etc.) is social charged with meanings, these language ideologies, in turn, enable speakers to embody their multiple identities in a variety of local contexts.

The North and the South as two socially constructed places may also be considered as two linguistic markets in Bourdieu's terms (1991). Neither is unified, although the South seems to be even less so than the North is. While the "authenticity" of Han culture in Taiwan is often associated with the South and the symbolic status of Taiwanese is appreciated, major cities in the South, such as Kaohsiung City and Tainan City, are increasingly aware of the pressure of globalization (cf. Lee, 2004), which may surface linguistically through the increase of value of certain languages that have a more global connotation. In Taipei, while there seems to be less contesting of and conflict in the evaluation of Mandarin and Taiwanese historically, the increasingly importance of English may have an impact

on the language profile of the city seeking to become the Asia-Pacific business hub. In addition to those regions' participation in the process of globalization, inside the nation, the rise of the DPP as the governing party, its connection with the South and the Southern Min population, the perceived "rivalry" between the central government and the Taipei City government, headed by a Mainlander and a popular political figure in KMT who received a doctoral degree from a prestigious American university and has a good command of English, and the central government's effort to decrease the developmental imbalance in the North and the South may all have a direct or indirect impact on how languages in Taiwan are evaluated and used. The linguistic market(s) in Taiwan can hardly be considered unified. A discussion on the applicability of Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction in the current Taiwanese context is beyond the scope of this chapter. Further research is needed to investigate the political economy of language use in Taiwan.

Chapter 5: Ideologies of Gender and Language:

A Study of *Qizhi* and *Taike*

This chapter investigates the interaction between ideologies of gender and language as manifested through the interviews that I conducted during the fieldwork. Instead of providing a broad survey of common discourses of gender and language and the socio-historical development of Taiwanese society that give rises to such discourses, as the last chapter does on language and region, this chapter has a narrower scope and focuses on ideologies of language and gender as manifested through two terms, *qizhi* "refinement," which has been introduced in the previous chapter, and *taike*, literally "Taiwanese guest/customer," a cultural stereotype of a particular group of Taiwanese young adults. Specifically, I examine the contexts in which the term *qizhi* occurs in the interviews and how its use illuminates the mutually reinforcing and constituting relationships between gender stereotypes and the social meanings of Taiwanese, Mandarin, and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. I further discuss the newly emergent discourse of *taike* as an act of social distinction among college students and as a locus of the investigation of masculinity, femininity, Taiwanese-ness, and language ideologies.

5.1 Qizhi: The Intersection of Gender, Language, and Region

According to *Far East Chinese-English Dictionary* (Zhang, 1992), *qizhi* is translated as "disposition" or "temperament" (p.829). An example of its usage is given: "the two brothers have entirely different *qizhi*" is translated as "the two brothers have entirely different temperaments." While the translation is close in this case, the daily usage of this term indexes a finer subset of the meaning of "disposition." It very often refers to "a refined disposition" rather than disposition as a general term.

In the Taiwanese context, there are two variations of this common usage of *qizhi*. The first one is more or less equivalent to "a refined disposition" and takes *qizhi* as a quality one has or does not have. The examples below show the positive and negative uses of this variation.

(1) a.

Pinyin	Ta	hen	you	qizhi
Gloss	s/he	very	have	qizhi

'S/he has a refined disposition; s/he is very refined'.

b.

Pinyin	Ta	hen	mei	qizhi
Gloss	s/he	very	NEG	qizhi

'S/he is very unrefined'.

In the second variation, *qizhi* is semantically approximate to "the degree of refinement" and is taken as a quality that can be evaluated positively or negatively. Examples are given in (2). Example (2a) is taken as synonymous to (1a), and (2b) to (1b).

(2) a.

Pinyin	Ta	qizhi	hen	hao
Gloss	S/he	qizhi	very	good

'S/he has a refined disposition; s/he is very refined'.

b.

Pinyin	Ta	qizhi	hen	zao
Gloss	s/he	qizhi	very	bad

'S/he is very unrefined'.

As is shown in the examples, while *qizhi* can be evaluated as good or bad (as in (2)), the default meaning of this term leans toward the positive evaluation of refinement, as shown in (1).

In the Taiwanese context, *qizhi* is a common term used especially frequently to evaluate women, although its use is not gender exclusive. In the previous chapter, we have seen how Ikuya, a male Taipei student at NCKU, comments on Taipei students' ways of speaking as more *qizhi* in general. In his comment as well as those of a number of other interviewees who offer similar accounts, *qizhi* is used to refer to a quality Taipei students share regardless of gender. However, the salience of gender in the use of this term can be exemplified by an anecdote during my fieldwork with the C.Y. Chorus. During their annual 4-day trip in winter, 2002, members were asked to vote and elect fellow members as Mr./Ms. Funny, Mr./Ms. Qizhi, Mr./Ms. Hard Worker, Mr./Ms. Congeniality, and several other categories. While the top contenders of most categories were not limited to one single gender, the nominees for Mr./Ms. Qizhi were all female. The gender exclusiveness in this case supports the claim that *qizhi* is a term more commonly associated with women and that women are more frequently subject to evaluation of the degree of their refinement. The creation of the category Mr./Ms. Qizhi also indicates the salience and members' appreciation of *qizhi* in the context of C.Y. Chorus, or perhaps more generally, among the college students that I worked with, or even the society at large.

It is not surprising that women are more frequently subject to evaluation of their *qizhi*. Although Taiwanese society has grown more and more modernized, the Confucian ideal of woman as *zhi shu da li* "knowing the reason and having a good manner" and as obedient to one's father, husband and, in the modern context, to authoritative figures in general remains part of the society's gender ideologies. Even outside of this immediate cultural context, we may observe some parallel between Taiwan and certain western societies with respect to their emphasis on refinement. Many studies focusing on western cultures have shown that, given their social positions, women (especially of the privileged social classes) are often expected to exhibit a greater degree of refinement than men in their own classes (cf. Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003).

The evaluative effect of the term *qizhi* can be profound. During schooling and socialization, young female Taiwanese are reminded repeatedly of its importance by adults' and peers' constant evaluation of the *qizhi* of female figures prominent in the society or in their daily life. As a female who grew up in Taiwan, I myself have encountered numerous occasions in which people commented on my *qizhi* either to my parents or directly to me. What puzzled me even before I became interested in sociolinguistics was what *qizhi* actually refers to. While *qizhi* appears to be an important cultural concept in shaping gender ideologies in Taiwan, what types of social practices are conceptualized (and naturalized) as indexical of *qizhi*?

To answer this question in the context of my fieldwork, I examine the spontaneous occurrences of *qizhi* in the interviews and how the interviewees related *qizhi* to particular social practices. None of the interview questions contained this term, nor did I attempt to elicit it in the interviews in any particular way. Nevertheless, *qizhi*, its close semantic equivalents such as *siwen, wenya*, and its antonyms, such as *cusu* (Mandarin) "unrefined, vulgar," *song* (Taiwanese) "unrefined, backward," occur systematically in the interviewees' responses to a number of questions, such as questions on gender and language use, on regional differences, on the stereotypes and social images of linguistic varieties in Taiwan, and on their portraits of *taike* and its female equivalent, *taimei*, literally "Taiwanese sister/girl." The noticeably frequent occurrences of *qizhi* in responses to questions on gender and language use and on the stereotypes of linguistic varieties, both of which center on language issues, suggest a strong association between *qizhi* and language use on multiple levels. Different from the above two questions, the ones on regional differences and *taike* are not language-specific and elicited answers that link *qizhi* with a wider range of social practices or personas. However, language remains one of the most commented on elements in relation to *qizhi* in the interviewees' responses. The following sections investigate the contextual use of *qizhi* and how language and gender ideologies are reproduced and sustained through talk on *qizhi*. The analysis begins with *qizhi* in the context of regional differences and provides an overview of the range of linguistic and non-linguistic practices and

images associated with *qizhi*, followed by a more detailed analysis on *qizhi* and ideologies of language and gender.

5.1.1 Qizhi and Regional Differences

The previous chapter discussed the relatively frequent occurrence of *qizhi* in Taipei students' comments on regional differences and the lack of occurrence of such a term among Tainan students. It also analyzed Ikuya's and MX's accounts of *qizhi* (or more precisely, lack of *qizhi* or bad *qizhi*) and its relations with southern characteristics, an easily agitated temperament, the Taiwanese language, and swearing in Ikuya's case, and with rurality, gender, physical confrontations, swearing, and the Taiwanese language in MX's case. In addition to Ikuya and MX, a number of interviewees also commented on differences in *qizhi* as a dimension of regional differences and related *qizhi* to a variety of social practices or personas when elaborating their arguments. Figure 1 below summarizes these accounts. The accounts are presented in two columns when the interviewees articulated both northern and southern characteristics in their comparisons. Sometimes only the southern characteristics were commented on, which may in part due to the fact that most of those who made such comments are from Taipei. Sometimes general terms such as "taste" or "ways of speaking" are given without further examples, in which case they are displayed in merged columns. If a characteristic was commented on more than once, the number of occurrences is marked in square parentheses. These

characteristics were explicitly or implicitly evaluated regarding *qizhi*. Plus and minus symbols in the parentheses indicate whether they appear to be evaluated positively or negatively in the interviewees' comments. Language-related comments are highlighted with light blue.

Regional Differences

↕

Differences in *qizhi*

↕

North	South
A poised disposition (+)	An easily agitated temperament (-)
Participation in cultural activities (+)	Physical strength
	Local music style (-)
Taste	
	Localness (-)
Correctness in English spelling in restaurant menu	
	Lack of retroflex (-)
	A Taiwanese accent in Mandarin (-)[2]
Ways of speaking [2]	
	Swearing/Taiwanese (-)[2]

Figure 1. Summary of interviewees' accounts on regional differences and *qizhi*

As this figure shows, while *qizhi* can be related to a wide range of social practices or personas, language use remains one of the most important, if not the most important, elements in the discourse of *qizhi*.

While the literal meaning of *qizhi* "disposition" seems quite neutral and general, such a term encompasses value judgments of various social practices and participates in the processes of social groupings. In this case, the discourses of *qizhi* and of regional differences are mutually constitutive and an understanding of their relationships can not be taken out of the ideological context of the society. The relationship of language ideologies, *qizhi*, and regional differences can be schematized as a bi-directional circle in figure 2 below. On the one hand, dominant language ideologies attach values to some linguistic varieties or ways of speaking as more refined than others, which manifest themselves clearly in the discourse of *qizhi*. The discourse of *qizhi*, nevertheless, does not limit itself in value judgment to linguistic practices but encompasses a wider range of social practices and images. Through *qizhi*, certain linguistic practices and social practices or personas are bound together, which, on the one hand, may reshape language ideologies, and on the other hand, may become resources in making social distinctions (such as the discourses of regional differences) and may serve as a window through which social structure can be examined. The interactions between *qizhi* and regional differences are by no means uni-directional or directly causal, either. Southerners are stereotypically judged as less refined because of the cultural hegemony that values the social

meanings associated with Taipei to a greater extent, not because they naturally possess less *qizhi*. Discourses of regional differences, in turn, may also reinforce and reshape language ideologies. In other words, the three are in a constant mutually constitutive relationship.

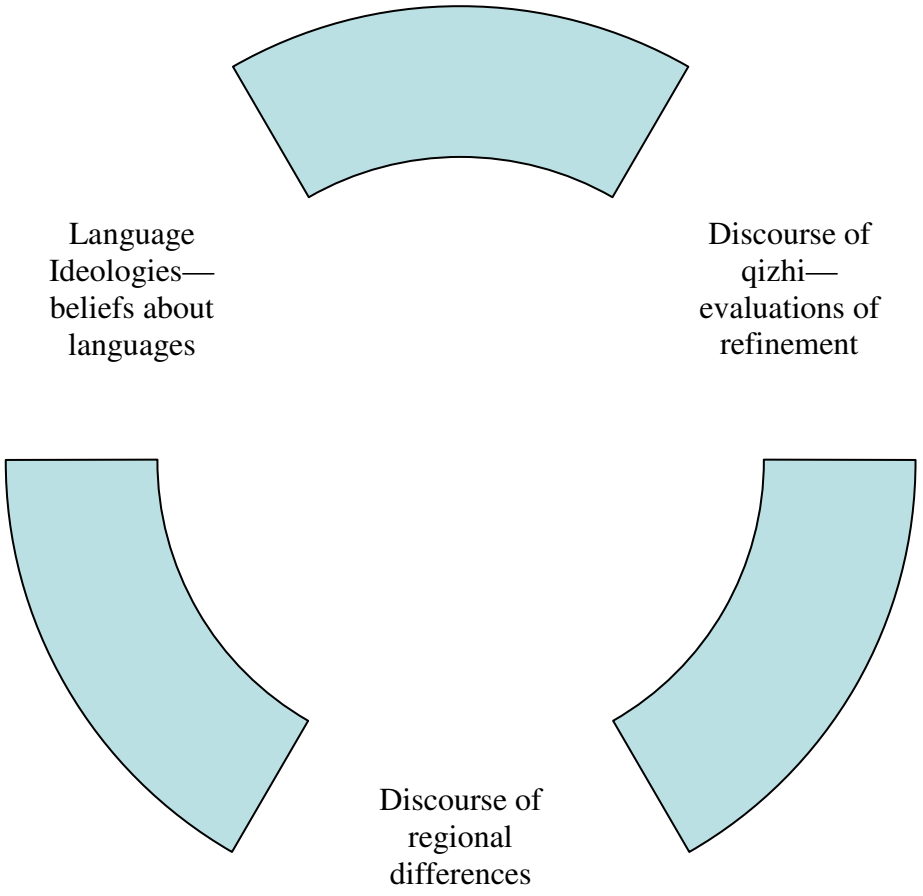

Figure 2. A 3-way mutually constitutive relationship between language ideologies, *qizhi*, and the discourses of regional differences

In sum, in this section, I have provided a general account of the social practices and images associated with *qizhi* in the interviewees' comments on regional differences. I have shown that while linguistic practices are not the only

elements connected with *qizhi*, they nevertheless play a highly significant role in the discourse of *qizhi* in the Taiwanese context. If *qizhi* is often linked to linguistic practices and is frequently invoked in the construction of a socially preferred femininity, we may begin to see how and why certain linguistic practices come to be gendered. To further explore this issue, in the next section, I investigate the occurrence of *qizhi* in interviewees' comments on gender and language use.

5.1.2 Qizhi, Language, and Gender

In each interview, the interviewee was asked a question on gender and language use: "do you think there is any perceivable gender difference in language use, for example, in terms of language choice, accents and intonations, word choice, etc.?" This question elicited a variety of answers. The responses ranged from very general descriptions such as "more refined" and "more vulgar" to specific comments on word choices, and from interactional styles such as degree of directness to language choice and lexical selection. However, I would like to emphasize that quite a few interviewees, while giving accounts on gender differences, also reported that the boundaries are getting fuzzier and there is a considerable degree of individual difference. Although gender continues to be a salient social category, some interviewees were quite aware of the fluid relationship between gender and language use.

There are some generalizations about domains of gender difference in language use repeatedly offered by the interviewees: refinement, relative frequency of the use of Mandarin and Taiwanese, and profanity. Although the three are intrinsically interwoven, I discuss them one by one, beginning with the generalization that women tend to speak in a more refined manner while men tend to be more vulgar.

REFINEMENT AND VULGARITY

The generalization that women and men display different degrees of refinement and vulgarity was explicitly articulated by some interviewees and hinted at by others with examples. In this section, I examine the occurrences of expressions that denote refinement and vulgarity in the interviews, namely, *qizhi*, its close semantic equivalents such as *siwen, wenya*, and its antonyms, such as *cusu* (Mandarin) "unrefined, vulgar," *song* (Taiwanese) "unrefined, simple-minded" in the interviewees' responses. Among the 44 interviewees, 13 explicitly used the above terms in characterizing gender differences in language use. This number does not include those who did not explicitly employ these terms but suggested such a view with examples that clearly pointed to this direction, such as swearing among men.

The number provides an indication of the prevalence of such a generalization. To further explore what linguistic practices are discursively

constructed as connected to *qizhi* and its synonyms and antonyms, I identify eight occasions in which these terms were explicitly linked to particular linguistic practices. There are four cases in which bad *qizhi* was connected with the Taiwanese language, one with Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, and four with swearing. The total number adds up to nine because in one case both the Taiwanese language and profanity were invoked simultaneously. There are additional cases where the comments centered on *qizhi* and linguistic practices. However, since the connection between the two was not explicitly articulated, these cases are excluded in the measurement here. Three examples are given below. Example (3) associates a lack of *qizhi* with profanity, example (4) with Taiwanese, example (5) with Taiwanese-accented Mandarin.

(3) SJJ, a male Tainan student at NTU.

SJJ: nüsheng jiahua dati shang hui bijiao ***wenya*** *yidian.*

In generally, women tend to speak in a more **refined** manner.

HY: Hmm-hmm.

SJJ: nansheng bijiao hui ba ***cusu*** *de hua dangzuo koutouchan.*

Men more often use **vulgar** words habitually.

HY: Hmm-hmm.

SJJ: buguo ye nanshuo la. Wo renshi yixie nüsheng, ye hui ba ***fayuci*** *dang koutou chan a.*

But sometimes it's hard to say. I also know some women who use **profane words**.

HY: Hmm-hmm.

……

SJJ: Keshi zai shisu de guannian li, jiushi ni shi nansheng, ni jiang naxie dong xi, renjia buhui juede zenyang .

But from the society's point of view, if you are a guy, and you use those words, people wouldn't find it a problem.

(SJJ continues elaborating the different societal standards toward profanity used by women and men.)

(4) DJJ, a male Tainan student at NTU

*DJJ: Nüsheng zhende bijiao shao jiang **taiyu**. Keneng tamen hui juede mei **qizhi**.*

Women really do not speak **Taiwanese** as much. Maybe they find it lacking in ***qizhi***.

HY: Na nansheng bijiao duo?

Men speak it more?

*DJJ: Dui a. Keneng nansheng jiang **taiyu**, keneng hui you zhe zhong shehui keban yinxiang hui juede taiyu bijiao meiyou **qizhi** zhi lei de.*

Right. Maybe when men speak **Taiwanese**, maybe there is this social stereotype that Taiwanese is somehow less **refined**.

HY: Suoyi nüsheng hui bijiao shao jiang.

So women tend to use it less.

DJJ: Mm.

Mm.

(5) LY, a female Tainan student at NTU

(Previously, LY was commenting on different tendency in language choice among men and women)

*LY: Erqie nüsheng yaoshi shuo **Taiwan guoyu** de hua hen hao xiao (laugh). Zenme zheme, jiu turan **qizhi** dou bujian le (laugh).*

In addition, if a female speaks **Taiwanese-accented Mandarin** it would sound funny (laugh). How come, it's like suddenly, all the ***qizhi*** disappears.

HY: (laugh)

LY: nansheng jiang jiu haihao ye, dui a.

It's not a problem when a guy speaks it, right.

The above examples show that there is a gendered bias in the evaluation of refinement and vulgarity. Women are expected to have a greater degree of refinement than men, while men are tolerated for being vulgar. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, this gender bias is similar to the one(s) in western societies. The

examples also illustrate some of the ways in which a discussion of refinement and vulgarity intersect with social meanings of Taiwanese, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, and profanity and how these linguistic practices are socially and discursively constructed as intrinsically related to *qizhi*. While the linkage between vulgarity and profanity seems straightforward, the connection between vulgarity and the Taiwanese language and a Taiwanese accent in Mandarin is ideologically mediated through a process identified by Irvine and Gal (2000) as *iconization*—the creation of a supposedly natural connection between a linguistic variety or feature(s) and the speakers who use it. In the next section, I further explore this issue, focusing on some of the possible ways the Taiwanese language and a lack of refinement are bound together, and on how the process of iconization interacts with gender ideologies and has an impact on the (perceived) gender differences in relative frequency of Mandarin and Taiwanese.

MANDARIN, TAIWANESE, AND PROFANITY

In addition to the report on the two genders' different tendencies toward refinement, two other recurrent comments with regard to gender and language use are the relative frequency of Mandarin and Taiwanese, on the one hand, and of swearing, on the other. Twenty-six out of the 44 interviewees commented on men's relative higher frequency of Taiwanese, or conversely, women's lower frequency of Taiwanese and higher percentage of Mandarin. It is the most commented on

characteristic across the interviews. Another highly salient linguistic practice associated with gender is swearing. Seventeen out of the 44 interviewees reported that men swear more. While it is observed that swearing is a habitual practice to some men, profanity produced by women is often described as shocking by the interviewees of either gender.

The two recurrent comments, men's relatively frequent use of Taiwanese and profane words, may seem to be two observations independent of each other. However, an understanding of the dominant language ideologies in Taiwan would lead us to regard the two as intimately connected. As I have briefly discussed in MX's case study in the previous chapter, the most frequently used swear words or phrases are predominantly from Taiwanese, and there is very often a lack of semantic equivalent of those terms in the Taiwan Mandarin spoken today. A number of reasons may have collectively contributed to this phenomenon. Historically, on the one hand, the promotion of Mandarin as the only legitimate language indexical of educatedness in the past language policies rendered Mandarin the status as a High language (cf. Ferguson, 1972; Fishman, 1967) functionally different from Taiwanese. The textbook Mandarin used at school would likely not supply Taiwanese speakers with profanity that might be useful in daily interactions. On the other hand, the marginalization of Taiwanese as an illegitimate language of lower class contributes to the symbolic association between the language and rebelliousness and toughness and makes it especially powerful and expressive in

confrontative contexts, where swearing often occurs. The historical development may have contributed to the initial connection between the Taiwanese language and profanity, and the link between them also acquires various social meanings as the society develops. In contemporary Taiwan, the association between profanity and Taiwanese seems to be widely recognized, which can be supported by my interview data. Among the 17 interviewees who commented on gender difference in frequency of swearing, 7 explicitly mentioned Taiwanese in conjunction with comments on profanity either directly or by providing profane examples that are in Taiwanese. Such an association can also be observed in many places in the interviews. For example, after Ying, a female Taipei student at NCKU, commenting on men's higher frequency of Taiwanese, she elaborated that *yinwei naxie yuzhuci dou shi taiyu a* "it's because those vulgar words are all Taiwanese," connecting and, to a certain degree, fusing the language and profanity. Another interviewee, Pai, a male Tainan student at NCKU, also reported his avoidance of using Taiwanese with female peers, with a concern that the uncontrollable, natural flow of profane words in his Taiwanese might invoke a negative impression. These data suggest a naturalized connection between the Taiwanese language and profanity. In light of such a naturalized connection explicitly made in cases mentioned above, when an interviewee reported on men's more frequent use of Taiwanese, at times it kept me wondering whether they meant "men speak Taiwanese more often" or "men swear (in Taiwanese) more often."

I have argued that past language policies have contributed to the phenomenon of Taiwanese-exclusive profanity—as a belief and also likely as an empirical fact in daily contexts among the majority of the Taiwanese population—and the naturalized connection between Taiwanese and swearing. My point is not to equate the two—Taiwanese is a language with a wide range of social meanings, as I have illustrated in chapter 4 and will discuss in the next section—but to investigate how such a connection influences and is influenced by ideologies of language and gender. The interrelationship between *qizhi* and ideologies of language and gender is represented in figure 3, which resembles figure 2 both in spirit and in presentation.

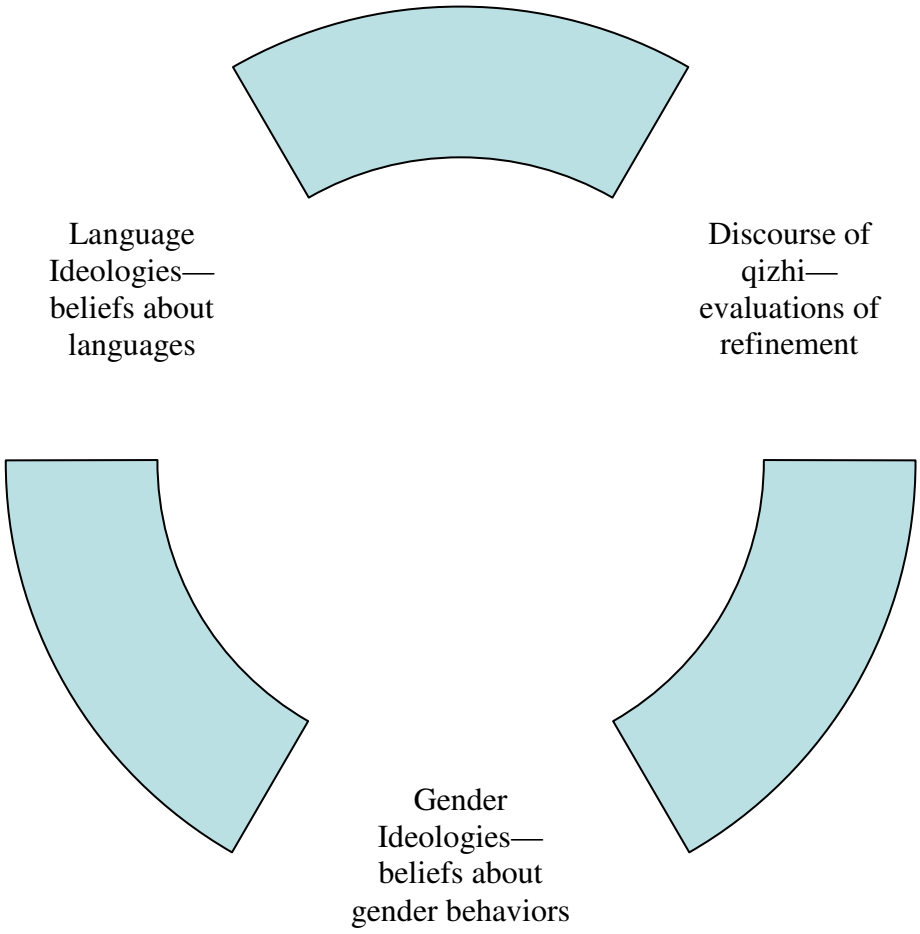

Figure 3. A 3-way mutually constitutive relationship between language ideologies, *qizhi*, and gender ideologies

It is, therefore, understandable why women in Taiwan (at least in the context of my study) tend to use Taiwanese less and speak Mandarin more, whether their reports and behavior represented faithful observations or social stereotypes. If women are more frequently subject to evaluation of *qizhi*, it is likely that they tend to use less

Taiwanese and more Mandarin, given that Taiwanese is, to a certain degree, indexical of vulgarity or profanity.

TAIWANESE AND ELEGANCE

Although Taiwanese was frequently linked with a lack of *qizhi* and profanity in the interviewees' discussion on language and gender, it was, however, recognized by several interviewees as an elegant language in other parts of the interviews when they discussed the (stereo)typical social images of languages in Taiwan, such as Mandarin, Taiwanese, English, Japanese, etc. Seven interviewees explicitly commented that Taiwanese is stereotypically regarded as a local, backward, or even vulgar language because of social reasons (such as language policies, schooling, and the misrepresentation of Taiwanese in the media). Structurally, it is no less (or even more) sophisticated than Mandarin. Adjectives and adjectival predicates, such as *youya* "elegant," *piaoliang* "beautiful," *dianya* "classically refined," *you qizhi* "have *qizhi*" were used to describe the Taiwanese language. Comments along this line often emphasized either the morphological richness or the complex eight-tone system of Taiwanese. The latter was often further linked to the advantage knowledge of Taiwanese phonology brings in an appreciation of classical Chinese poetry. Taiwanese is considered a language phonologically more closely related to middle Chinese than Mandarin is and therefore a useful tool in approaching classical Chinese literature.

The two views examined in this and the previous sections illustrate the disparate and even contradictory attitudes toward Taiwanese that co-exist in contemporary Taiwan. The contradiction also, to a certain degree, manifests the struggles many contemporary Taiwanese people encounter in defining their Taiwanese-ness (and Chinese-ness). On the one hand, Taiwan's ambiguous political status and lack of diplomatic support in international society and China's claim on Taiwan as part of its territory evoke an increasingly strong sense of Taiwanese identity. The Taiwanese language thus becomes an important symbol in representing Taiwan's uniqueness and difference from the greater China and, in certain contexts, can be associated with the more radical version of the pursuit of Taiwanese independence. The extreme of this line of thinking would equate the Chinese culture with China as a nation state and seek to diminish or further deny the elements of Chinese culture in Taiwan, asserting that although the earlier settlers immigrated from Mainland China, they had developed a culture distinctively different from that of Chinese.

On the other hand, the dominant language ideologies continue to attach higher prestige to Mandarin, and the relative lack of currency of Taiwanese in the international arena also contributes to the prevailing view of Taiwanese as a local, less overtly prestigious language. One strategy some activists seek to promote Taiwanese is to emphasize its structural complexity and its authenticity in preserving middle Chinese phonology. Yet this argument, especially the latter point,

to a certain degree, stands in contradiction to some political discourses in Taiwan which seek to separate Chinese-ness from Taiwanese-ness.

The complexity involved in Taiwanese people's national identities and the definitions of Taiwanese-ness and Chinese-ness are beyond the scope of this study. However, the investigation on language ideologies as manifested in the interviews serves as a window through which parallels between evaluations of languages and social structure can be illuminated. The interviewees' disparate comments on the relationships between Taiwanese, vulgarity, and elegance echo the competing and sometimes even contradictory discourses about what it means to be a contemporary Taiwanese and exemplify Woolard's characterization of language ideology as "a mediating link between social forms and forms of talk" (1998, p. 3). Figure 4 summarizes the two competing strands of ideologies concerning the Taiwanese language as manifested by the discussion of the language, vulgarity, and elegance.

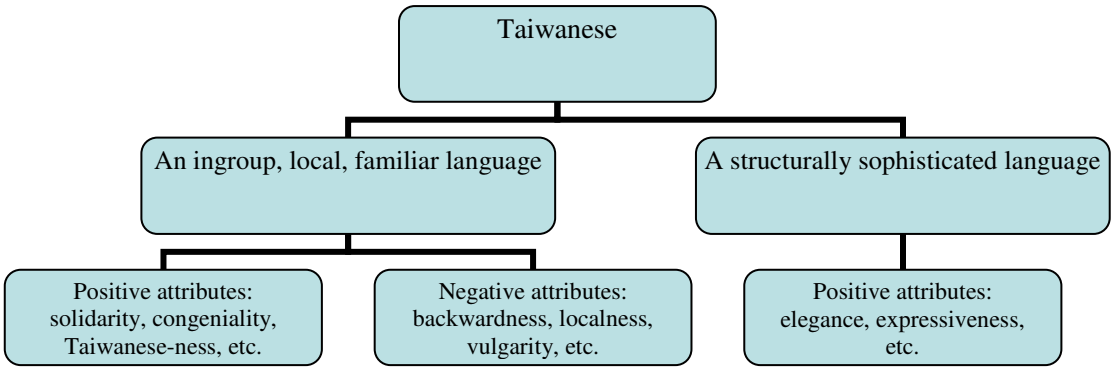

Figure 4. Two competing strands of language ideologies concerning the Taiwanese language as manifested in the vulgarity vs. elegance contestation.

Although the interviewees articulated a range of social meanings of Taiwanese and do not univocally attach one consistent social image to the language, it appears that in the context of the discussion about language and gender, the association between Taiwanese and less *qizhi* still, to a large extent, prevails. In fact, I suspect that in most of the daily interactional contexts, the predominant social meanings attached to Taiwanese remain rooted in Taiwanese's status as an ingroup, local, and private language, whether taken positively or negatively (i.e., the left branch in figure 4). Although Taiwanese has gained more and more respect as a

legitimate language not inferior to Mandarin, it appears that the discourse on the sophistication of Taiwanese has not triggered a shift in its indexical meanings in most of the everyday interactions in contemporary Taiwan, at least in the context of my study.

TAIWANESE-ACCENTED MANDARIN, QIZHI, AND GENDER

In the previous chapter and this chapter, I have explored the dominant language ideologies in contemporary Taiwan, focusing especially on Mandarin, Taiwanese, and their relationships with regions and gender. Another common linguistic variety, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, is briefly mentioned but has not been examined in detail. In this section, I investigate language ideologies concerning Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and its relationship with *qizhi* and gender stereotypes.

Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, or *Taiwan guoyu*, is a frequently used label referring to Mandarin spoken with a Taiwanese accent. Although there are stereotypical linguistic features associated with *Taiwan guoyu*, it is not a homogenous, well-defined linguistic system. In the Taiwanese context, *Taiwan guoyu* is often taken as the equivalent of non-standard Mandarin spoken by native speakers of Taiwanese, or a hybrid variety that mix elements from both Mandarin and Taiwanese, as evidenced by my interviewees' comments when they were asked to define what *Taiwan guoyu* is. In other words, it is very often more difficult to

pinpoint exactly what *Taiwan guoyu* refers to than it is to define it in terms of what it is not.

In this study, I take Taiwanese-accented Mandarin as a sociolinguistic stereotype rather than an autonomous linguistic variety. Some of the stereotypical linguistic features associated with Taiwanese-accented Mandarin have been discussed in the previous chapter, such as the absence of retroflex consonants and monothongization. Two other phonological features commonly reported by my interviewees are the interchangeable use of [an] and [aŋ] and the merge of [f] with [h] (or more accurately, [hw]). Take the latter, for example: 'happen' [**f**aʂəŋ] in standard Taiwan Mandarin becomes [**hw**aʂəŋ] in Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, which means "peanut" in the standard variety. It may also be realized as [**hw**asəŋ], or [**hw**asən], in conjunction with other stereotypical non-standard features.

Taiwanese-accented Mandarin shares many social meanings with Taiwanese, perhaps because it is generally not considered any speaker's mother tongue. Taiwanese-accented Mandarin speakers are often assumed to be native speakers of Taiwanese who use Taiwanese predominantly in their daily interaction. A noticeable trace of Taiwanese phonology in Mandarin, therefore, is perceived as directly indexical of competence and predominant use of Taiwanese. Such a strong association between Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and Taiwanese is illuminated by accounts of personal experience given by Jie, a female Taipei student at NCKU.

Born in Kaohsiung, Jie moved to Taipei with her family before she entered elementary school. Although a Mandarin-dominant speaker with very limited fluency in Taiwanese, her Mandarin still contains noticeable traces of Taiwanese phonology. She reported that she was repeatedly assumed to be a fluent Taiwanese speaker, which she does not take as a compliment. Three other interviewees also made explicit comment on the association between Taiwanese and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, defining Taiwanese-accented Mandarin as Mandarin spoken by habitual Taiwanese speakers.

The perceived intimate connection between the two linguistic varieties may partially explain why Taiwanese-accented Mandarin shares quite a few social meanings with Taiwanese. While both are often linked to positive characteristics such as solidarity and congeniality, and to negative attributes such as backwardness, vulgarity, etc. (i.e., those represented in the left branch, i.e., the left and the middle on the bottom row, of figure 4 in the last section), Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, however, is not considered a structurally sophisticated variety as Taiwanese is in certain contexts. In other words, it does not share with Taiwanese the positive attributes presented in the right branch in figure 4. Moreover, the social stereotype of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin as a somehow "deficient" variety of Mandarin spoken by habitual Taiwanese speakers lacking full command of Mandarin further contributes to its stigmatization. While Taiwanese as a language choice does not

necessary imply a lack of competence in Mandarin, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin often triggers such an assumption.

The stigmatization of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is therefore twofold. On the one hand, as a "hybrid" variety coming into being in a contact situation, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is often evaluated critically and negatively, a phenomenon identified by Cameron (1995) as *verbal hygiene*. On the other hand, not every "hybrid" variety is regarded as equal. Speaking Taiwanese with a Mandarin accent would receive a drastically different social evaluation from speaking Taiwanese-accented Mandarin (cf. Hill's discussions on Whites' hyperanglicized pronunciation of Spanish words in American Southwest (1993, 1999)). Implicit in the stigma of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is the uneven distribution of linguistic capital across social groups (Bourdieu, 1991).

The stigma of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin makes it especially incompatible with *qizhi* and preferred femininity in the context of my study. In addition to LY's comment on gendered evaluations on *qizhi* and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin in (5) presented earlier in the chapter, similar comments were also made by other interviewees. The following excerpt in (6) provides another example. In the excerpt, *binlang xishi* "areca nut Xishi" refers to an occupation and a social stereotype. These are typically young females who sell prepared areca nut from transparent glass stalls along freeways in certain areas in Taiwan to drivers who pass by. Prepared areca nut is functionally similar to chewing tobacco, which is

popular among and stereotypically linked to blue-collar workers. There are usually similar stalls within close range to each other. To be competitive and to catch the attention of the drivers passing by, a *binlang xishi* usually dresses sexy, sometimes even exposing herself to a certain degree. *Xishi* is the name of a well known beauty in Chinese history and literature who has a place similar to Helen in Greek mythology and Western literature. The phrase *binlang xishi* was parodically coined approximately a decade ago when the new occupation becomes a distinctive social phenomenon.

(6)

HY: Na Taiwan guoyu de hua lie, ni juede you shenme daibiaoxing de renwu shi jiang Taiwan guoyu de?

How about Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. Is there any figure (group) that is typical Taiwanese-accented Mandarin speaker?

DJJ: (.) Taiwan guoyu (.) Binlang xishi.

(.) Taiwanese-accented Mandarin (.) Areca nut Xishi.

HY: Binlang xishi (laugh)=

Areca nut Xishi (laugh)=

DJJ: =Wo changchang kan nage shehui zhuiqi ling ah

= I often watch the show 'shehui zhuiqi ling' (a police drama)

HY: Hmm-hmm

DJJ: Binlang xishi (laugh) suiran zhang de hen piaoliang, danshi yi jianghua jiu pogong le.

Areca nut Xishi (laugh). Although they look pretty, once they begin to speak the cover is blown.

HY: (laugh)

*DJJ: Taiwan guoyu, wanquan meiyou **qizhi***

Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. Totally lacking in **qizhi**.

In this excerpt, upon my inquiry, DJJ offered *binlang xishi* as stereotypical Taiwanese-accented Mandarin speakers and commented on their physical beauty and yet unrefined ways of speaking. Although a rather short excerpt, it richly displays the complex and intricate relationships between Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, qizhi, gender, and class (loosely defined as socio-economic status). Specifically, it shows that: (1) the evaluation of *qizhi* is heavily dependent on linguistic performance. Thus, a *binlang xishi* can maintain a socially desirable image until she opens her mouth and produces Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, and (2) the evaluation of *qizhi* is not only gendered but also class based. *Qizhi* as a facet of femininity is perhaps appreciated more among the more highly educated (such as my interviewees) than among the stigmatized blue-collar consumers of areca nut. When making a negative evaluation of *binlang xishi* in the excerpt, DJJ simultaneously articulates the class-based evaluation of femininity and distances

himself from the consumers of areca nut and the type of femininity that the *binlang xishi* stand for.

To further explore the articulation of and emphasis on *qizhi* as class-related and as an act of social distinction, I now turn to a discussion of *taike* and its female equivalent *taimei*. They are recently coined labels referring to social stereotypes of a particular type of Taiwanese young adult. The analysis of discourses about *taike* will further illustrate the intricately interwoven relationship between *qizhi* and the dominant ideologies of language, gender, and class in contemporary Taiwan.

5.2 Taike, Taimei, and the Ideologies of Language, Class, and Gender

Taike, literally "Taiwanese guest/visitor/customer" and its female derivative *taimei* "Taiwanese sister/girl" are recently-coined phrases that have gained their popularity on the Internet and have gradually spread to the realm of verbal interactions. The term *taike* invokes a cultural stereotype of a young adult in Taiwan whose lifestyle, linguistic repertoire, and fashion sense are considered distinctively local, unknowingly unsophisticated, and unsuccessfully imitative of the current trends without an awareness of their limitations.

Since *taike* was a term that had just begun to gain its popularity when the fieldwork was conducted, not all interviewees were aware of such a usage. Among the 44 interviewees, 6 reported that they either had not heard of this term, or had heard of it but barely understood it. The rest of the interviewees, however, seemed

eager to share with me the popular definitions of this term and were able to provide surprisingly concrete characteristics of *taike*. The wide range of descriptions can be categorized into three groups: (1) how they dress, from the materials and patterns of the shirt and pants/shorts they wear to the color of their dyed hair; (2) what linguistic variety they speak; and (3) how they act. Specifically, *taike* was most stereotypically characterized as Taiwanese young men who wear silk, flowery shirts and fake brand apparel with dyed blond hair, speak either Taiwanese-accented Mandarin (or Taiwanese), and lead an aimless life. *Taimei* was sometimes commented on as just the female version of *taike* and sometimes more specific accounts were provided, which described *taime* as lacking *qizhi*, unsophisticatedly dressy, loud, and in certain contexts, synonymous with *binlang xishi* in some ways.

5.2.1 The Discourse of Taike and the Construction of Social Groups

The cultural stereotype of *taike* (and *taimei*) is a particularly interesting locus for sociolinguistic research where ideologies of language, class, gender, and the discourse of *qizhi* intersect. As a popular mock term circulating rapidly on the college-affiliated BBS's that I observed (and some of the web-based bulletin boards that I casually observed), this term appeals to users who are young, educated, and familiar with the computer and the Internet. They circulate *taike*-related jokes on the Internet and in face-to-face interactions and constantly reinterpret and reinvent the popular discourse of *taike*. While those engaging in these behaviors are by no means

a homogenous group, to a certain degree, they are bound together by *taike* as a significant Other. In contrast to *taike* who represents everything from head to toe that would be regarded (by my interviewees and their peers) as backward, local, unrefined, and unsuccessfully imitative, the circulators of the mock term are able to establish themselves as modern, cosmopolitan, urban sophisticated, and trendy—or are certainly making an effort to. While the discourse of *taike* serves as an act of social distinction (cf. Bourdieu, 1991; Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; Eckert, 2000; Zhang, forthcoming), it also illuminates my interviewees and their peers' class-related evaluation on *qizhi* and Taiwanese-ness. Here again, class is loosely defined as socio-economic status. Although many circulators of *taike* discourses are students who have not begun participating in labor market yet, their education and family resources endow them with greater symbolic and material capital than many of the perceived members of the *taike* group.

Upon a close examination of the *taike* discourse, it is clear that in addition to the "we" and the *taike*, a third group features in the discourse, which may be termed "authentic Taiwanese." This group is not always explicitly invoked, but is sometimes constructed as a contrast to *taike*. Members of this group share with *taike* the image of localness, but are often positively portrayed as older local figures who do not seek to be someone they are not. Table 1 summarizes the most commented on characteristics associated with *taike* and their implications in the construction of the other two groups.

TABLE 1. COMMON CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GROUPS FEATURED IN THE DISCOURSE OF *TAIKE*

The "we": circulators of Taike discourse	Taike	"Authentic Taiwanese"
● modern ● cosmopolitan ● urban sophisticated ● trendy	● backward ● local ● unrefined ● unsuccessfully imitative ● inconsistent in style	● older in age ● "authentically" local ● not seeking to be someone they are not

In addition to the characteristics listed in Table 1, language also plays a significant role in the discourse of *taike*. *Taike* jokes circulated on the Internet often ridicule their Taiwanese accent in Mandarin. Among my interviewees, 15 mention language use in their discussion of *taike*, with 13 accounts on its association with Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and 4 with Taiwanese. In other words, *taike* is most frequently associated with Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, while its connection to Taiwanese is recognized to a lesser degree. Along this line, while the "we" group mock and distance themselves from *taike*, they also construct themselves as having linguistic repertories very different from those of *taike*'s. Although the "we" group never

explicitly offers the characteristics of their own linguistic practices, it is reasonable to assume that this group perceives itself as mainstream Taiwan Mandarin speakers and possibly has some knowledge of English. Table 2 below modifies Table 1 and adds the linguistic characteristics of the three groups. The typical linguistic variety used by the "authentic Taiwanese" group is not directly commented on. However, given the sociolinguistic situation in Taiwan, this group is most likely to be considered speakers of Taiwanese.

TABLE 2. COMMON CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GROUPS FEATURED IN THE DISCOURSE OF *TAIKE*, WITH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING LANGUAGE USE.

The "we": circulators of Taike discourse	Taike	"Authentic Taiwanese"
● modern ● cosmopolitan ● urban sophisticated ● trendy	● backward ● local ● unrefined ● unsuccessfully imitative ● inconsistent in style	● older in age ● "authentically" local ● not seeking to be someone they are not
● Mandarin ● (English)	● Taiwanese-accented Mandarin ● (Taiwanese)	● Taiwanese

Even though a succinct summary, Table 2 is able to show the complexities involved in the discourse of *taike*. Implicit in such a discourse are two other contrastive groups. Each is associated with certain life styles, stereotypical characteristics, and common linguistic varieties in Taiwan, and the connections between their perceived

non-linguistic and linguistic practices are not randomly allocated but are intimately related to language ideologies in contemporary Taiwan.

The sense of "otherness" in the discourse of *taike*, to a certain degree, corresponds to the meaning of the morpheme *ke*, the second part of the term. According to *Far East Chinese-English Dictionary* (Zhang, 1992), *ke*, when used as a noun, can convey the following several meanings:

1. a guest
2. a stranger; an alien; a foreigner
3. a customer
4. a spectator; an audience
5. an adventurer

While the use of *ke* may trigger different meanings across contexts, all the above meanings (except for 5, which is also used less frequently) invoke the image of an outsider. Thus, the use of *ke* in this label helps construct the image of a *taike* as a local Taiwanese who is inauthentic—in contrast to both the local/rural "authentic" Taiwanese and the cosmopolitan urban Taiwanese. In the next section, I further discuss the (in)authenticity of *taike* and its iconic relationship with Taiwanese-accented Mandarin.

5.2.2 *Taike* and Dominant Language Ideologies

Earlier in this chapter, I have discussed the stigmatization of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. I have argued that its social perception as a "hybrid" variety and its implicit connotation of lacking a full command of Mandarin contribute to its lower prestige in comparison to both Mandarin and Taiwanese. The discourse of *taike* provides solid support for my earlier discussions. *Taike* as a mock term represents the ultimate version of unsophisticatedness from the viewpoint of those who circulate and construct this discourse, and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is the linguistic variety overwhelmingly indicated as the set of language practices associated with the *taike*. This perception that a *taike* tends to speak Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is especially interesting because, as I have pointed out in the earlier discussion, speakers of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin are frequently taken as habitual Taiwanese speakers. That is to say, it is most likely that members of the social group labeled as *taike* would be perceived as competent in both varieties. However, it is Taiwanese-accented Mandarin that was most frequently called into place when the stereotype of *taike* is discussed. What is interesting is the iconic relationship between Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and *taike*'s non-linguistic characteristics (cf. Irvine & Gal, 2000). While a *taike* is constructed as someone who unsophisticatedly fuses incompatible fashion styles, the stereotype of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin as a "mixed" variety further reinforces the hybrid image of *taike*.

As I have discussed, although Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is emphasized by 13 interviewees as the linguistic variety most strongly associated with *taike*, Taiwanese is also mentioned by four interviewees in their descriptions of *taike*. An examination of the bottom row of Table 2 shows that Taiwanese can be associated (though to a different degree) with both *taike* and "authentic Taiwanese," which are evaluated quite differently. The disparate attitudes toward Taiwanese implicit in the *taike* discourse are consistent with my earlier discussions on the two competing strands of language ideologies concerning the Taiwanese language as manifested in the vulgarity vs. elegance contestation (Figure 4).

The discourse of *taike* not only provides us a locus to investigate dominant language ideologies in Taiwan, but also reveals the tension between globalization/modernization and nativization in a nation-state in search of its identity. As a small island with limited natural resources, Taiwanese people are generally aware of the importance of international trade and are proud of Taiwan's rapid economic development in the last few decades. Participation in the global world is linguistically realized as the increasingly positive evaluations toward languages with international importance, such as English, Japanese, and Mandarin. On the other hand, Taiwan's ambivalent national status in the international context also creates a growing sense of Taiwanese identity and an urge to define Taiwan's uniqueness from other Chinese communities in the world. The Taiwanese language and its settler culture thus become symbolic resources in defining a Taiwanese-ness

distinctive from other relevant groups. The discourse of *taike*, to a certain degree, voices the tension many Taiwanese people experience in the two competing strands in the ideological debate of the meaning of Taiwanese-ness. Seen in this light, *taike* is someone lost in between: someone who cannot figure out who he/she is.

5.2.3 Taimei: Just the Female Version of Taike?

Although *taike* is often used as a general term in reference to a particular social group, it takes the male gender as the default. A derivative term, *taimei* is used to specify the female members of this group. In the interviews, the interviewees who knew the term often provided stereotypical characteristics associated with *taike* and made less reference to *taimei*. While 10 of them specifically mentioned and defined *taimei*, others either made no reference or commented that it is just the female version of *taike.* In other words, *taike* was taken as the general label under which *taimei* was the female subset. The relationship between the circulators of *taike* discourse, *taike*, and *taimei* as expressed by the interviewees is illustrated in Figure 5 below.

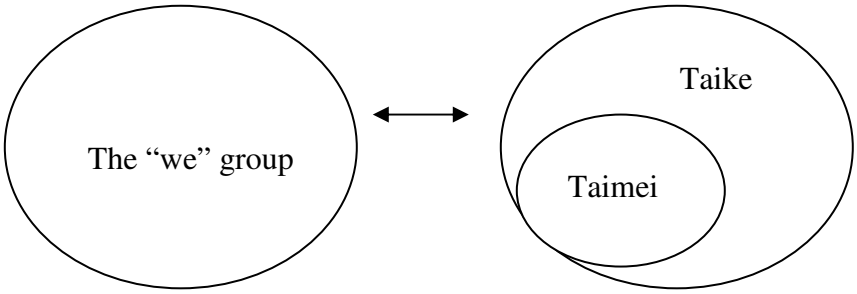

Figure 5. The relationship between the circulators of *taike* discourse (the "we" group), *taike*, and *taimei* as expressed by the interviewees

Such a view has its validity, but it does not provide a complete picture of the relationships between *taike, taimei,* and the class-related evaluations of femininity implicit in the related discourse(s). While *taike* and *taimei* are grouped together because they both represent what is considered unrefined from the point of view of the circulators, the practices and images regarded as unrefined are often gender specific. After all, while *taike* is stereotypically portrayed as wearing loose, silk, flowery shirt, I have not yet encountered any description that relates *taimei* to such a style. The comments on *taimei*, therefore, provide us an opportunity to investigate

the relation between refinement and socially (un)desirable femininity from the point of view of the circulators.

In the limited accounts of *taimei* in the interviews, *taimei* was commented by more than one interviewee as *hen song* "very unrefined," *mei qizhi* "lacking qizhi," best represented by *binlang xishi*, unsophisticatedly dressy and loud. While they can be physically attractive, their fashion styles or linguistic behaviors, to a certain degree, give their femininity up. What I find particularly interesting is one interviewee's comment on *taimei* as "girls who are not like girls." It appears that refinement is a highly desirable component of an ideal female image from the point of view of the "we" group such that its absence would severely undermine one's femininity. Conversely, refinement does not seem to be related to masculinity in a similar way. Although the characteristics associated with *taike* are considered unsophisticated and undesirable, their masculinity is not questioned in the discourse of *taike*.

What I wish to argue is that *taimei* is not just a female version of *taike*. Instead, the stereotype of *taime* interacts directly with the "we" group's class-related evaluations of femininity. Refinement, or *qizhi*, is a characteristic often associated with linguistic behaviors evaluated positively by my interviewees and their peers as a desirable facet of femininity. However, femininity itself is not a monolithic concept. The association between refinement and femininity appears evident in the

context of my study, but I do not wish to overgeneralize the connection across different classes or social groups that may have very different life experiences.

In light of the above discussion, we may slightly modify Figure 5, establishing a direct interaction between *taimei* and the "we" group, as shown in Figure 6.

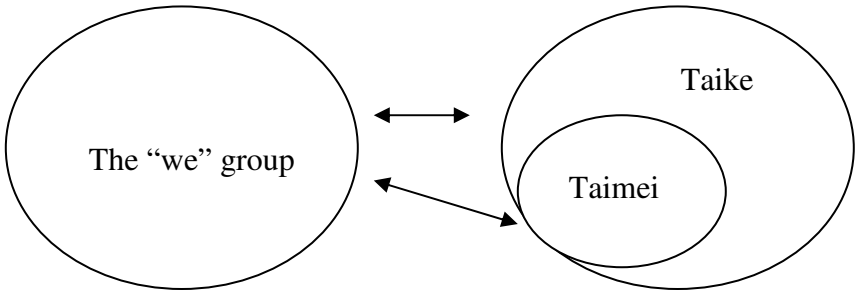

Figure 6. The relationship between the circulators of *taike* discourse (the "we" group), *taike*, and *taimei.*

In Figure 6, while *taimei* is still part of the general *taike* discourse, it also directly interacts with the value judgment of the circulators of such discourses.

In the Taiwanese context, the stereotype of *taike* has become increasingly salient that derivative usages such as *tai*, and *taike qiang* begin to circulate in verbal

interactions. *Tai* (the first syllable of *taike*) is used as an adjective that describes a person who possesses the characteristics of *taike*. Two examples are given below.

(7)a.

Pinyin	TJ	hen	tai
Gloss	TJ	very	tai

"TJ is very Tai/TJ possesses the characteristics of a Taike."

b.

Pinyin	Ta	ran	le	ge	hen	tai	de	toufa
Gloss	He	dye	ASP	CL	very	tai	NOM[8]	hair

"He got his hair dyed (in a very Tai fashion)."

In addition to *tai* as a newly emergent adjective, *taike qiang,* literally "taike tone," is used to refer to Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, as an alternative of *Taiwan guoyu*. The term *taike qiang* was used less frequently than *tai* as an adjective when the fieldwork was conducted and appeared to have a slightly more negative connotation than *Taiwan guoyu* did. The newly emergent adjective *tai* is especially intriguing, since *tai* is not only the first syllable of *taike* but also that of Taiwan/Taiwanese. While the use of *tai* is deeply connected with *taike* as a social stereotype, it is also used to make fun of close friends and to show solidarity in certain contexts. Whether such a usage will continue to be a way to mock a social Other or will grow

to be a way to laugh with (rather than at) fellow Taiwanese remain to be seen. Whether the association between Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and the images of *taike* as suggested in the newly-coined *taike qiang* will have any impact on language attitudes toward Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is also an open question at this stage of development.

5.3 Revisiting the Cross-gender Performance in the Co-presidents' Play, "A Night with TSA"

In the previous chapter, I analyzed language stylization of a female TSA member who played one of the co-presidents in "A Night with TSA." I mentioned that her performance was considered especially hilarious and drew the most applause from the audience among all the actors in the play, largely because as a female, her portrait of a familiar male role and her use of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin created an especially rich display of multivocality in her performance. I have shown that there were three major elements in these acts of stylization: the co-president as the target of playful imitation, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin as the linguistic realization of the imitation, and the actress as the performer of stylization. I discussed the relationship between the former two and the multiple voices involved. Specifically, I argued that the relationship between the co-president and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin was metaphorical and brought into play stereotyped

[8] ASP refers to aspectual markers; CL refers to classifiers; and NOM refers to nominalizers.

semiotic and ideological values associated with a loosely defined yet socially significant group that the co-president and the audience could neither totally identify as an ingroup member nor completely as an outgroup member (i.e., from the loosely defined "South"). In this section, I would like to briefly explore the interaction between the latter two in light of the discussions of ideologies concerning gender and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin in this chapter.

The actress's stylization of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin generated quite some reactions from the audience because it created and highlighted a dissonance in the dominant ideologies of language, gender, and class: it brought together an extreme version of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and a well-educated female college student. As I have discussed in this chapter, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is especially stigmatized and is strongly associated with *taike*, which, to a certain degree, represents the ultimate antithesis of refinement from the point of view of many college students. For an educated female student to produce stereotypical Taiwanese-accented Mandarin in a college setting would be unthinkable, were it not for a stage performance. Even during a stage performance, the stylization of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin from a female is still unexpected. Her cross-gender performance, therefore, draws the audience's attention to how evaluations to linguistic practices (as well as the bodily hexis (Bourdieu, 1991)) are often gendered and class-related and to the performative elements in gender constitution (cf. Butler, 1997; Walters, 1999).

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter investigates my interviewees' perception of how Taiwanese women and men speak. Instead of seeking an account of whether and how women and men speak differently, this chapter focuses on the interaction between language ideologies and gender expectations and stereotypes. Taking *qizhi*, a frequently invoked cultural concept, as the starting point, I show that, first, *qizhi* is commonly associated with a range of social practices, among which linguistic practices play a significant role. Second, *qizhi* or its close semantic equivalents are used more often to describe or evaluate women's ways of speaking, although its use is not gender exclusive. Third, linguistic varieties commonly used in Taiwan, such as Taiwanese, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, Mandarin, are associated with *qizhi* (or a lack of *qizhi*) to varying degree. While Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is most often recognized as a stigmatized "hybrid" variety, Taiwanese, on the other hand, is simultaneously connected with vulgarity and linguistic and structural sophistication, which seems to closely correspond to Taiwanese people's struggle in defining their Taiwanese-ness. Forth, the investigation of the newly emergent stereotypes of *taike* and *taimei* as the antithesis of the preferred self images of the circulators of these terms further illustrates how *qizhi* (or a lack of *qizhi*) is intimately related to dominant language ideologies. It also shows *qizhi* as a component of femininity may

be appreciated to different extents across classes and that femininity is not a monolithic concept.

If *qizhi* is more frequently used to evaluate women and is linked to linguistic varieties commonly used in Taiwan in different ways, this cultural concept might have a significant impact on regulating how women (especially educated women) should behave linguistically. Indeed this argument is supported by two explicit accounts of peer-censorship concerning linguistic practices that Jie and Ying made in their interviewees. Both Jie and Ying graduated from Taipei Municipal First Girls' High School, one of the most prestigious high schools in Taiwan. In Taiwan, after nine years of compulsory education, students who choose the high school track usually have to take an entrance examination to determine which high school s/he could receive admission from. In other words, high school is a time when the school one attends begins to symbolize one's intellectual ability. The most prestigious high schools are usually sex segregated. Jie, with a noticeable Taiwanese accent in her Mandarin, reported that she first became aware of her accent in high school because she was repeatedly ridiculed by her peers and grew so frustrated that sometimes she would deliberately exaggerate the accent to show that she was just putting on an act. Ying, with quite standard Mandarin phonology, reported that she and her peers in high school often mocked classmates who pronounced words in a non-standard way. She also noted that a mindless slip into Taiwanese would induce reactions such as *ni ganma zhuang mei qizhi?* "why are you acting like you don't have *qizhi*?" Both Jie

and Ying commented that high school was the stage when peer-censorship concerning language use was the strictest (cf. Eckert's book on Jocks and Burnouts (2000)).

Coates (1999), in an article entitled "Changing Femininities: The Talk of Teenage Girls," examines the ways in which gender beliefs and practices are manifested in the conversations of white middle-class teenage girls in London across a three-year span and shows that one of the greatest pressure girls encounter during the transition from childhood to adulthood is the set of cultural ideologies concerning women. While Jie and Ying are from a very different culture, their high school experiences with language and *qizhi* show some similarities with Coates' observations. On the one hand, given the education system in Taiwan, high school is often the stage when an awareness of class differentiation begins to gain its salience. On the other hand, sex segregation in more prestigious high schools in such a transitional stage to womanhood also contributes to students' self-consciousness of cultural ideologies concerning educated women. The emphasis on *qizhi* that Jie and Ying experienced in their high school days, therefore, provides us a powerful example of how *qizhi* as a cultural concept becomes one of the ways through which ideologies of gender, language, and class are verbalized, reinforced, challenged, and sustained.

Chapter 6: Language Use on College-Affiliated BBSs

This chapter investigates creative uses of writing systems on four Taiwan-based college-affiliated Electronic Bulletin Board Services. It shares with the previous chapters a concern with the relationship between micro-level linguistic practices and ideologies about language and speakers' conceptualization of social distinctions. Unlike the previous chapters, however, this chapter examines language use in a less studied realm: interaction in online contexts.

I believe that one of the strengths of this research project is the incorporation of the analysis of both Internet and conversational data in the study of language ideologies and identities. Although many researchers have approached the issues related to language ideologies and identities with a wide range of data, few have investigated how interaction on the Internet reflects and reproduces language ideologies and participates in the construction of identities. By focusing on the language use of college students, who spend a significant amount of time online and are developing conscious awareness of their identities, this chapter demonstrates how Taiwanese college students make use of the linguistic resources at their disposal to create language style in response to change in mode of communication. It also shows how different types of communication interact with each other as language users construct identities and language attitudes, how these creative uses

are part and parcel of socio-economic processes, and how linguistic practices in different mediums are situated within the larger sociopolitical context.[9]

6.1 The Internet and the Myth of a Global Village

Hundreds of millions of people around the globe communicate with each other daily through the Internet, with users appropriating the medium for both instrumental functions and recreational purposes. Along with the growing influence of English as the international language of choice in both online and face-to-face interactions, the seemingly ubiquitous nature of the Internet has created a myth in some parts of the Western world that this Web-based environment is a "global village" that is culturally and linguistically transparent (Hawisher & Selfe, 2000). Contributing to the rise of this myth are the prominent role of English globally and the fact that the Internet was first created in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Hafner & Lyon, 1996) and popularized in Western countries where English is used in daily communication. The myth of linguistic transparency is reflected in the relative lack of research on computer-mediated communication in non-English-based Internet environments.

Although the Internet may be accelerating the globalization process, each society or culture tends to have a set of localized linguistic practices on the Internet that distinguishes its members from those of other significant groups (Appadurai,

[9] Part of the analysis in this chapter also appears in Su (2003, 2004).

1996; Hongladarom, 2000). This chapter is an attempt to investigate the linguistic features of computer-mediated communication in a non-Western context: the *Taiwan-based Internet*, defined as sites that are frequented by Taiwanese users and for which servers are housed in Taiwan. Specifically, this chapter examines creative uses of writing systems in college-affiliated Electronic Bulletin Board Services (hereafter BBSs), including the rendering in Chinese characters of the sounds of English, Taiwanese, and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and the recycling of a transliteration alphabet used in Taiwanese elementary education.

6.2 BBS as a Site of Study

Since the popularization of the Internet in the 1990's in Taiwan, online communication has gradually become part of the daily interaction for many Taiwanese people, especially for members of younger generations and those whose careers or life styles demand a larger amount of information exchange with individuals, institutions, or corporations in geographically distant areas.[10] To prepare their students for the age of digital technology, many middle schools and high schools have begun to include computer classes in their curriculum and to encourage their students to search for information on the Internet. These classes and the prevalence of high-speed Internet service at an increasingly affordable price

[10] According to the latest bi-annual survey conducted by Taiwan Network Information Center, by January 2005, 60.25% of the Taiwanese population had been online. (Information retrieved from http://www.twnic.net.tw/).

provide opportunities for many Taiwanese youngsters to establish certain familiarity with the Internet well before they enter colleges.

However, the degree of familiarity with the Internet may vary widely among individuals at these pre-college stages. Some students may already have extensive experience in the Web, e-mails, BBS, chat rooms, or instant message services such as MSN or ICQ, while others may have limited exposure to the interactional aspect of the Internet and use it primarily as a resource to search for information.

Despite such differences, the range of variation in experience and in the amount of time spent on the Internet seems to decrease when students enter college. When asked about how frequently they use the Internet in their post high school days, 37 out of my 44 interviewees answered with a positive "every day," while the remaining 7 stated that they got online "almost every day." Some indicated that they spend extended hours online, and one even referred to his own behavior as "addictive." In other words, in contrast to their varying experience with the Internet in their high school days, all my interviewees got online frequently and regularly as part of their college experience.

A number of reasons collectively contribute to the frequent use of the Internet among the students that I worked with. Both of the universities where I conducted fieldwork offer free high-speed cable service in student dormitories. Partly encouraged by the ease of access, the Internet, especially the college BBSs, have become one of the most powerful means to get information about campus

activities and to develop personal social networks. Each department, student organization, and many university services have established their own bulletin boards in the college-affiliated BBS's. There are also boards that function as discussion groups and personal spaces similar to blogs where students can post articles that they write. In addition to the asynchronous message postings, the BBS's also offer a number of other interactional features, such as instant messaging, BBS mail, chat room, and a service that broadcasts lyrics of popular songs or personal quotes on the home page, which serves as public messages to the persons of the requesters' choices.

Several of my interviewees reported that getting online everyday, especially on BBS, has become a necessity both in terms of the management of academic and extra-curricular activity, and the development of their social network. Many class and departmental announcements, as well as information about past and future social events on campus, are posted on the BBS. The student organizations that I have observed all rely heavily on the BBS to administer their organizations, on the one hand, and to support each other emotionally and to create a sense of group solidarity, on the other hand. For example, upcoming activities of the organizations are always announced on the boards, and members often respond with whether they will be able to attend and what is going on in their life. A past event is often recounted with a great detail soon after its occurrence either by a single member or collectively by a number of members. Many interviewees also have personal

bulletin boards and have reported that they spend significant amount of time managing their own boards and developing relationships with friends known from both face-to-face and online contexts by participating in their personal bulletin boards or by engaging one another in instant messaging on a regular basis. Campus news and popular jokes and articles circulate through personal boards, organization boards, discussion groups, instant messages, and BBS mail. One of my interviewees, JX, commented on the importance of BBS among her peers: *hen duo ren hui yinwei yi ge zhan dang le er shenghuo mei you zhongxin* "Many people would feel that their life suddenly has become empty simply because a BBS station is down."

To a certain degree, we may say the college-affiliated BBS plays a crucial role in the imagining of a campus community and in shaping the students' college experience. It thus becomes an important site where language ideologies and identity as a contemporary Taiwanese college student are manifested and constantly reshaped. In the remaining part of the chapter, I examine forms of the creative use of writing systems observed from the targeted BBSs and investigate how these practices are related to local and dominant language ideologies circulating among the BBS users/college students and the larger Taiwanese population.

6.3 Writing in Taiwan

A brief explanation of the relationship between the Taiwanese language and Chinese characters is necessary to facilitate understanding of the examples analyzed below. As mentioned earlier, Taiwanese derives from a dialect of Southern Min, a Chinese language from southern China. Taiwanese and Mandarin, a Chinese language from northern China, belong to the same language family, Sino-Tibetan, but are mutually unintelligible. In many introductory linguistics books, this unique relationship between Chinese languages is often cited in discussions of the difficulty of defining terms like "dialect" and "language." Despite differences as vast as those between Dutch and English (Chao, 1976), Chinese languages are often reported as sharing a common writing system that renders texts mutually intelligible (Wardhaugh, 1992).

While this simplified explanation of the relationship between Chinese languages is informative, it creates an imprecise impression that the Chinese languages spoken today—such as Southern Min, Cantonese, and Mandarin—can be written with a shared set of Chinese characters. Instead of claiming that Chinese languages share a common writing system, it is probably more appropriate to say that many Chinese languages make use of Chinese characters as part of their writing system. Historically, Chinese characters were developed to write Classical Chinese (also called Literary Chinese), a written language functionally different from the vernacular languages spoken in different areas in China. Until as recently as the

beginning of the twentieth century, Chinese characters were still used only for Classical Chinese.

However, in the 1920s, a movement advocating a colloquial writing system emerged in China. This movement managed to reform classical Chinese writing practices and to develop a new form of writing based on colloquial Mandarin, China's national language at that time. Since then, a misconception which equates Chinese characters with Mandarin has become increasingly prevalent among the Taiwanese in general as well as others. The Taiwanese government's promotion of Mandarin and the lack of standardized writing systems for other Chinese languages further reinforce this impression. Today, an educated Taiwanese speaker may find it relatively easy to read a Classical Chinese text aloud in Taiwanese, but to write colloquial Taiwanese poses a major problem. We can find associations between some Taiwanese words and Chinese characters, and according to Hsiau (1997), approximately 70 percent of Taiwanese can be codified through Chinese characters, but the other 30 percent of Taiwanese words cannot be written with the characters in current use. Moreover, Taiwan's populace is not adequately educated about the relationship between the Taiwanese language and Chinese characters (Cheng, 1989; Chiung, 1999; DeFrancis, 1984; Hsu, 1992; Huang, 1993; Norman, 1988).

The Chinese writing system is morphosyllabic (DeFrancis, 1984): each character has an inherent meaning and is associated with a single-syllable pronunciation. The inherent meaning usually stays constant across Chinese

languages, while the phonological realizations of each character may vary among these languages. However, for social and historical reasons, it is the Mandarin pronunciation that is the most salient both in print texts and in the online environment in Taiwan. In this chapter, all indications of the pronunciations of Chinese characters refer to Mandarin pronunciations, in which case the above description that each character is associated with a single-syllable pronunciation mostly holds true.

6.4 Word-Processing in Taiwan

Since Chinese characters are totally different from the Roman alphabet and are far greater in number, keyboard entry of Chinese requires special software programs that map each character onto two to five keys on the keyboard, typically based on either the *shape/composition* or the *pronunciation* of the character. Various input methods have been proposed. A Website dedicated to Chinese word-processing (http://input.foruto.com; unfortunately, only in Chinese) lists over sixty input methods, among which the most popular in Taiwan are the *Zhuyin* input method, the *Cangjie* method, and the *Wuxiami* method. *Zhuyin* inputs by sound, while *Cangjie* and *Wuxiami* input by shape.

Zhuyin, or Mandarin Phonetic Symbols, is an alphabetic writing system used exclusively in Taiwan to aid in the acquisition of Chinese characters during elementary education. The *Zhuyin* alphabet is comprised of 37 symbols, each of

which is part of a Chinese character. Thus, *Zhuyin* symbols resemble characters to a certain degree, but are easily differentiated by literate Chinese readers. Each symbol represents either a vowel or a consonant in Mandarin. On a typical Taiwanese keyboard (Figure 1), the *Zhuyin* symbols appear in the lower-right corner of the keys. For example, the "A" key also represents "ㄇ," the third symbol of the *Zhuyin* alphabet, which is pronounced approximately as "mo" or "m" in English. To enter a character such as 米 (rice, pronounced as "mi"), a user of the *Zhuyin* method switches from the default Roman alphabet to the *Zhuyin* alphabet and then carries out four steps: (1) first, he or she keys in "ㄇ"; (2) next, he or she inserts"ㄧ" (which reads as "yi," looks something like a dash, and shares a key with the Roman letter "U"); then (3) a tone marker which shares a key with the numeral "3" is entered "ˇ." This produces a list of homonyms from which a user must choose (step 4). Figure 2 shows the windows appearing immediately after the *Zhuyin* symbols are entered. The left window indicates the *Zhuyin* symbols that have been keyed in, while the right window displays a list of characters that are pronounced as "mi" with the intended tone. The last step is to select the intended character from the list, which is number 1 in this case.

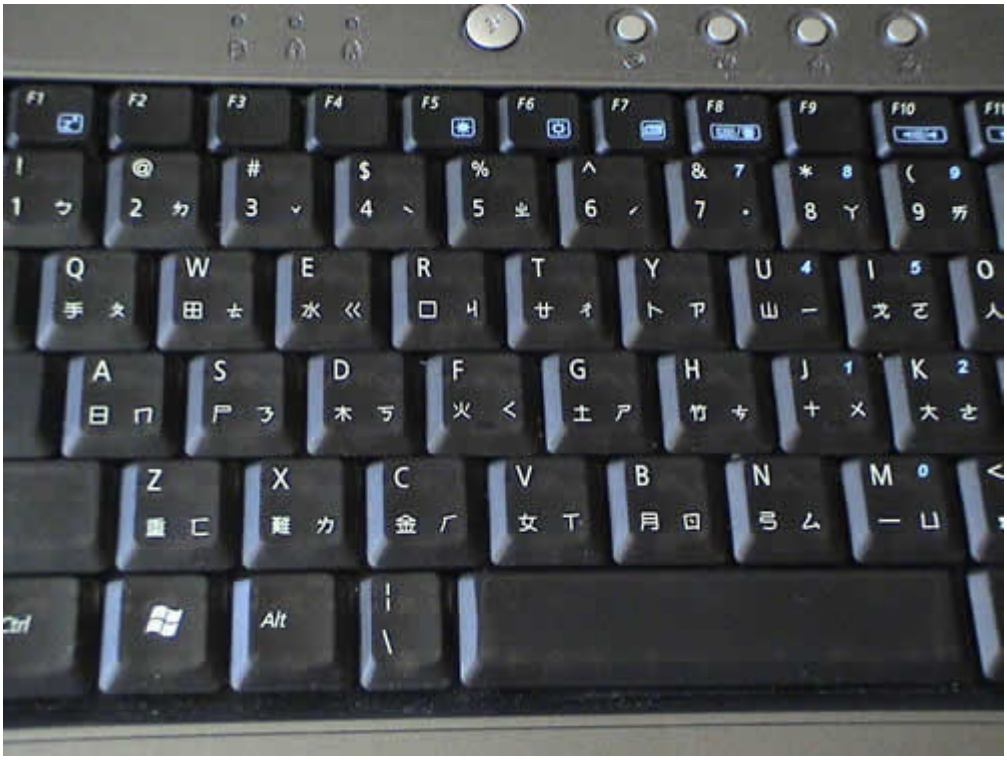

Figure 1. A Taiwanese computer keyboard

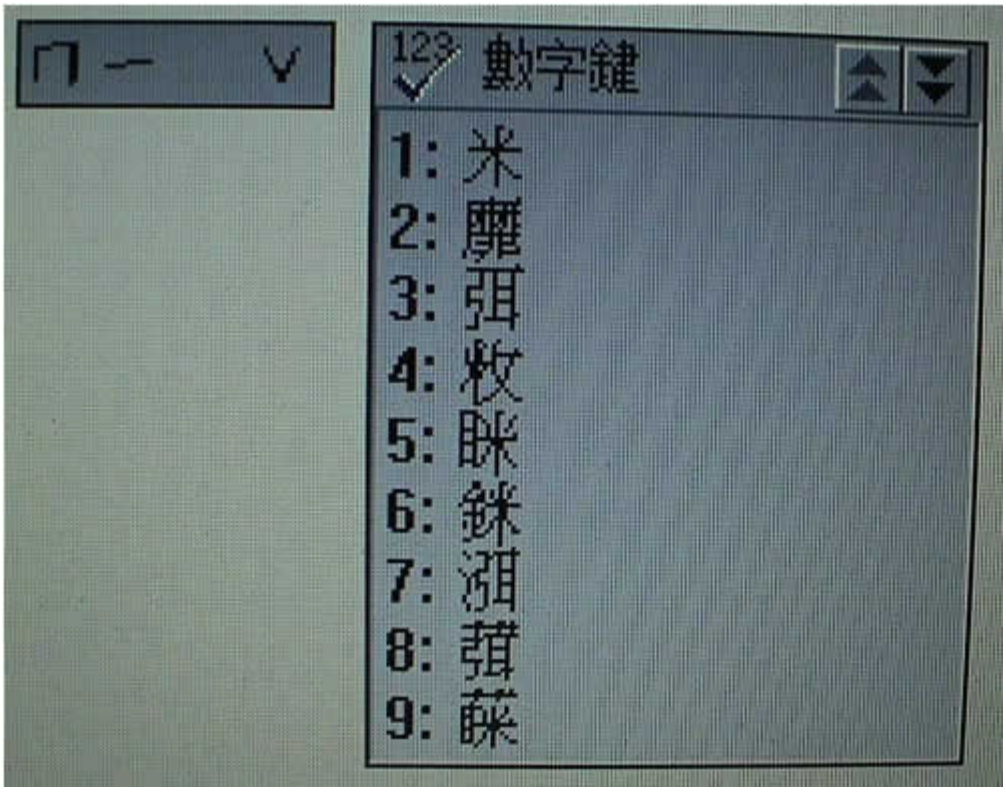

Figure 2. The last step in the *Zhuyin* input method: A list of homonyms

The *Cangjie* input method, on the other hand, is shape-based. It assigns keys to twenty four radicals, or character roots. The radicals appear in the lower-left corner of the keys (see Figure 1). The first step when inputting is to divide each character in one's mind into one to five parts, depending on how complex the character is. Each part is mapped onto a radical. Inputting the correct sequence of radicals produces the intended character. For example, the character 明 ("bright") can be divided into two parts, left and right. The left part is mapped onto the "A"

key, which also represents the radical 日("sun"), while the right part is mapped onto the "B" key, representing the radical 月("moon"). Striking the sequence A, B outputs the intended character (Chu, 2005; Jun'ichiro, 1998-2001). *Wuxiami*, an input method gaining popularity among professional typists, is similar to *Cangjie* in its shaped-based principle, but differs significantly in details.

Among the three, the *Zhuyin* input method is probably the most accessible to the public, since the acquisition of the *Zhuyin* alphabet is fundamental in elementary education in Taiwan. Mastery of *Cangjie* or *Wuxiami*, on the other hand, requires memorization of the mapping principles for character parts, radicals, and keys at the initial stage. However, once the principles are memorized, these methods input much more speedily and accurately than the *Zhuyin* method, mainly because the number of keys involved in inputting a character is usually fewer in *Cangjie* and *Wuxiami. Cangjie* and *Wuxiami* are therefore preferred choices among professional typists, or those who do a large amount of Chinese word-processing. They also require a slightly higher level of literacy in Chinese. That is, one has to know the shape and the components of a character, not simply the pronunciation of a word, to be able to make use of such an input method.

6.5 Language Use on the Taiwan-based BBSs

In this section, I analyze patterns of language use on Taiwan-based BBSs, focusing on three creative uses of writing systems which I call Stylized English, Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, and Stylized Taiwanese, notions that are based upon Rampton's (1995) and Coupland's (2001) concepts of stylization. A comparison between the three stylized uses is followed by a discussion of *Zhuyin Wen*, writing involving the alphabetic transliteration system used in elementary education. Among the 235 messages collected for this study, 34 contain switching between Chinese characters and English (example 1, below); 17 contain Stylized English (example 2, below); 44 contain Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin (example 3, below); 39 contain Stylized Taiwanese (example 4, below); 87 contain *Zhuyin Wen* (example 5, below); and 14 contain more than one of the aforementioned patterns of writing.

6.5.1 Stylized Representations (Use of Chinese Characters to Represent Linguistic Varieties Other than Mandarin)

In addition to being used in everyday interactions, the languages spoken in Taiwan also serve as linguistic resources for a variety of discursive practices on the Taiwan-based Internet. The main language on Taiwanese BBSs is Mandarin, which

users write in standardized traditional Chinese characters.[11] Occasionally, English words or expressions written in the Roman alphabet appear in this otherwise Chinese-dominant environment. An example of an English word embedded in a Chinese is given in example (1).

(1)

印象中上回麗麗學姊的 suggestion 好像沒什麼回應ㄚ~~~~

"From what I can recall, no one seemed to respond to Lily's last suggestion~~~"

This pattern of language use is reminiscent of the spoken Mandarin-English code-switching that occasionally occurs among educated speakers in Taiwan. In contrast to the linguistic practices discussed later in this section, this pattern does not seem to involve playfulness, though it does represent the construction of complex multilingual identities (Myers-Scotton, 1993).

In addition to Mandarin and occasional English code-switching, other languages and dialects—such as Taiwanese, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, English, Hakka-accented Mandarin, or even Japanese—are also playfully written with Chinese characters in BBS postings. The most popular creative uses of writing

[11] There are two systems of written Chinese characters in current use in Chinese-speaking communities. Traditional Chinese characters are used mainly in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Simplified Chinese characters are used mainly in China and Singapore.

systems involve the stylized use of Chinese characters to mimic Taiwanese, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, and English.

The use of the term "stylized" to describe the representation of other languages in Chinese characters is based on Rampton's and Coupland's concepts of stylization. In his study of cross-ethnic interaction among adolescents in a multi-ethnic neighborhood in England, Rampton (1995) reports a phenomenon in which young people put on an “Asian” accent to project a comic persona, which he terms “stylized Asian English.” Coupland (2001) later explicitly defines stylization as “the knowing deployment of culturally familiar styles and identities that are marked as deviating from those predictably associated with the current speaking context” (p. 345). He further emphasizes, as noted earlier, that “stylization operates in a specific mode of social action, PERFORMANCE in the strong, theatrical, and quasi-theatrical sense of that term” (p. 346, emphasis his). In the current study, the terms Stylized English, Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, and Stylized Taiwanese are so named, first, because such practices are marked choices on the Taiwan-based Internet, and their use carries a strong sense of playfulness and performs an online persona. Second, the online practices they denote carry with them the social meanings of English, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, and Taiwanese from more familiar daily contexts. The everyday meanings of these languages and dialects are appropriated and reproduced through these practices, resulting in a unique mode of communication.

In these playful linguistic practices, characters are adopted that represent sounds similar to the phonology of the target languages or accents, regardless of their original meanings. While the string of characters may not be readily transparent, to the initiated user the characters are easily recognized as representing sounds that humorously mimic their English, Taiwanese, or Taiwanese-accented Mandarin counterparts. Two examples of **Stylized English** are given in example (2) Each example presents a case of this form of language play and its intended meaning. The actual production of Stylized English is indicated by an arrow. *Pinyin*, a Mandarin Romanization system, is also provided to indicate the sound structure of the two phrases.[12] In 2a, for example, the phrase in Chinese characters reads as "ou-mai-ga," which is close to the pronunciation of the common English phrase, "Oh, my god." Yet the literal meaning of each character tells a different story.

[12] *Pinyin* is a Mandarin Romanization system created in the 1950s in China (DeFrancis, 1984; Norman, 1988). Until very recently, the *Pinyin* system remained unknown to the majority of Taiwanese. The *Pinyin* system, which is employed frequently by linguists in presenting Mandarin Chinese data, is used here as a means of transliteration to aid readers' understanding of the sound structure of Chinese characters. In practice, *Pinyin* is hardly seen on the Taiwan-based Internet.

(2) a.

→	*Character*	噢	買	尬
	Pinyin	ou	mai	ga
	Gloss	interjection	to-buy	to-embarrass
	Tone Contour	high-level	low-dipping	high-falling
	Intended Meaning	"Oh, my god."		

b.

→	*Character*	古	耐
	Pinyin	gu	nai
	Gloss	ancient	endure
	Tone Contour	low-dipping	high-falling
	Intended Meaning	"Good night."	

In addition to the creative use of the morphosyllabic nature of Chinese orthography, the tonal characteristics of Mandarin Chinese are often employed in stylized English. In example 2a, the high-low-high-falling tone contour of the three characters vividly mimics the intonation often associated with the familiar English expression, "Oh, my god." The missing "d" in the final position of "god" is also reminiscent of the preference in Taiwanese-style English for open syllables, making

the phrase sound as though it were uttered by a Taiwanese, rather than a native English, speaker. In 2b, the low-high-falling tone contour resembles the intonation associated with the phrase "good night" as well. Stylized English plays down the stiffness and arrogance often linked in Taiwan with the use of English, a language with international status and overt prestige, lending this alternative linguistic practice a sense of locality and congeniality while simultaneously maintaining a level of sophistication associated with English.

The above examples can be seen as a type of "rebus writing," which is also found in English and other languages. Symbols representing one or more words are used to represent another word which is similar in sound, regardless of the original meaning of the symbols (Fromkin & Rodman, 1998; Matthews, 1997). For example, in the English expression "back 2 school," the sound of "2" is borrowed to represent the word "to." The original meaning of the borrowed symbol is ignored, and only its sound is employed as a hint to the intended meaning. Because of the non-alphabetic, morphosyllabic nature of the Chinese writing system, rebus writing is even more productive in Chinese than in English.

Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is often playfully written using Chinese characters as well. Two examples of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin are given in example (3).

(3) a.

The intended meaning:

Character	**很**	多	人	**去**	考
Pinyin	**hen**	duo	ren	**qu**	kao
Gloss	**very**	many	people	**go**	take-exam

"Many people took the exam."

Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin → Actual production

→ *Character*	**混**	多	人	**企**	考
Pinyin	**hun**	duo	ren	**qi**	kao
Gloss	**mix**	many	people	**business**	take-exam

b.

The intended meaning:

Character	是	個	帥	**哥**
Pinyin	shi	ge	shuai	**ge**
Gloss	is	CL	handsome	**brother**

"(He) is a good-looking guy."

Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin → Actual production

→ *Character*	是	個	帥	**鍋**
Pinyin	shi	ge	shuai	**guo**
Gloss	is	CL	handsome	**pot**

This pattern of writing has been used on the Taiwan-based BBSs for at least half a decade. The chat room data I collected in 1998 already contained a large amount of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. However, with the passage of time, the novelty and creativity involved in this linguistic practice seem to be declining. In the 1998 data, there was more variation in the ways Taiwanese-accented Mandarin was represented with Chinese characters, while the characters involved are more conventionalized in the 2002.

In addition to Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and English, Taiwanese expressions appear on the Taiwan-based Internet as well. When Internet users attempt to write Taiwanese, two strategies are often employed. One strategy involves finding the Chinese character that corresponds exactly to a Taiwanese word. The other is to pick characters whose Mandarin pronunciations resemble that of the intended Taiwanese expression. Since many Taiwanese words do not have corresponding Chinese characters which remain in use—and even if there were, the general public is usually not aware of their existence—the second strategy is much more frequently used. The result of this second strategy is a creative use of writing similar to the Stylized English and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin presented earlier. Two examples of **Stylized Taiwanese** are given in example (4). The characters in bold refer to the exact place where Stylized Taiwanese occurs. The *Pinyin* provides the Mandarin pronunciation for each character.

(4) a.

→	*Character*	開始	天天	**趴**	**趴**	**造**
	Pinyin	kaishi	tiantian	**pa**	**pa**	**zao**
	Gloss	begin	everyday	**prostrate**	**prostrate**	**build**
	Intended Meaning	"(I) begin to **run around energetically** everyday."				

b.

→	*Character*	我	**熊**	**熊**	想	起來
	Pinyin	wo	**xiong**	**xiong**	xiang	qilai
	Gloss	I	**bear**	**bear**	recall	ASP
	Intended Meaning	"I **suddenly** recalled (something)."				

The Mandarin pronunciation of ***pa pa zao*** and ***xiong xiong*** in 4a and 4b represent approximate pronunciations of the intended Taiwanese expressions "running around energetically" and "suddenly," respectively. Although such a strategy seems to be a simple expedient, it has become increasingly popular due to its novelty and the playful incongruity it engenders between literal and intended meanings. In both examples, the repetition of sounds connotes child-like speech, and enhances the playfulness associated with such practices.

The novelty of this linguistic practice arises from two sources. First, it is uncommon to find Taiwanese in written form; and second, even in cases where written Taiwanese is attempted (for example, in serious articles published by advocates of Taiwanese standardization), Taiwanese expressions are rarely represented in this way. Although viewed negatively from a purist's perspective, such unorthodox representations of Taiwanese expressions provide Internet users an opportunity to play creatively with available linguistic resources.

In sum, stylized practices identified in this section all involve play based on the relationship between sound and meaning, or in Saussure's terms (1983), *signifié* (signified) and *signifiant* (signifier) (cf. Sherzer, 2002).

6.5.2 *Zhuyin Wen* (Recycling of a Transliteration Alphabet Used in Elementary Education)

In addition to the three patterns of writing discussed above, a new linguistic practice is emerging on the Taiwan-based Internet that is being criticized, even as it gains in popularity. Unlike the above three stylistic forms, this newer practice has a widely recognized name: *Zhuyin Wen*. Specifically, *Wen* refers to "written language." *Zhuyin* is the alphabetic writing system used exclusively in Taiwan and discussed above.

Zhuyin Wen refers to an online writing style in which some or all Chinese characters are replaced by *Zhuyin*. An example is given in example (5).

(5) *Zhuyin Wen*

→ *Zhuyin Wen*	ㄧ	ㄍ	ㄏ	ㄗ
Pinyin of Zhuyin Wen	i	g	h	z
The Intended Character	一	個	盒	子
Pinyin of the Intended Character	yi	ge	he	zi
Phrasal Meaning	"a box"			

In *Zhuyin Wen*, the complete phonetic representation of a character is reduced to a consonant (or less commonly, a vowel). The recovery of the referential meaning in *Zhuyin Wen* is not always easy: A reader has to figure out the missing vowels. In addition, tonal information, an important aspect of Chinese languages, is not provided in *Zhuyin Wen*. Thus, a reader has to infer the intended meaning based on context and partial linguistic clues. Unlike Stylized English, Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, and Stylized Taiwanese, all of which call the reader's attention to the incompatibility between sound and meaning, the playfulness of (as well as resentment toward) *Zhuyin Wen* derives from its underspecified quality and the juxtaposition of Chinese characters, the norm of writing, with an alphabet associated with imperfectly-acquired literacy. The use of *Zhuyin Wen* also conveys a sense of

cuteness or naïveté because it is reminiscent of compositions written by elementary school students, which mix Chinese characters and *Zhuyin* symbols.

One may wonder whether the emergence of *Zhuyin Wen* is related to the prevalence of the *Zhuyin* method of word-processing in Taiwan. Since it is easier to type *Zhuyin* symbols than to use the shape-based Cangjie or Wuxiami methods, their use might encourage the practices of *Zhuyin Wen*. While the *Zhuyin* input method has been used since the early 1990's, the prevalence of *Zhuyin Wen* online is a relatively recent development. There are two possible reasons for its increasing popularity. First, as one interviewee suggests, as the Internet becomes more accessible to the public, the average age of initial contact with the Internet has been lowered. Many young students, who have not yet mastered the Chinese writing system or have not acquired an alternative input method by shape such as Cangjie or Wuxiami, are already frequent Internet users. They may well display a greater tendency than older people to use the *Zhuyin* input system and to write in *Zhuyin Wen*. In turn, their language use may influence language practices on the Taiwan-based Internet to a certain degree. This possibility is not addressed in this chapter, which focuses exclusively on university students, a homogeneous age group, at one point in time. A second possibility is that the use of *Zhuyin Wen*, along with other creative writing practices, engenders group solidarity among Taiwanese Internet users, and that this fact in turn reinforces its use. This possibility is explored later in this chapter.

6.6 Phonological Features of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin

The perception that age and regional factors are related to Taiwanese-accented Mandarin might be factual, but the idea that there is a single Taiwanese accent is, however, stereotypical. In reality, speakers with diverse backgrounds manage to speak Mandarin in different ways, yet the accent captured by stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin seems to focus on the stereotypical images held by the general public. Thus, it is worth exploring the features that Internet users associate with "the accent." From the data I collected, it appears that all contrasts made in written Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin are related to three phonological features: roundedness, retroflexness, and the replacement of [f] with [h] followed by a rounded vowel. Table 1 shows some of the instances of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin from my data.

TABLE 1. PHONOLOGICAL FEATURES OF STYLIZED TAIWANESE-ACCENTED MANDARIN (CF. SU, 2004)

Mandarin Counterpart			Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin		
characters	meaning	features	characters	meaning	features
我 wo	I/me	[+round]	偶 ou	even number	[-round]
去 qu	to go	[+round]	企 qi	business	[-round]
哥 ge	brother	[-round]	鍋 guo	pot	[+round]
兒 er	son	[+retroflex]	鵝 e	goose	[-retroflex]
人 ren	people	[-round] [+retroflex]	倫 lun	order	[+round] [-retroflex]
誰 shei	who	[-round] [+retroflex]	髓 sui	marrow	[+round] [-retroflex]
是 shi	to be	[-round] [+retroflex]	素 su	plain; simple	[+round] [-retroflex]
發 fa	to induce	[f] [-round]	花 hwa	flower	[h] [+round]
瘋 feng	crazy	[f] [-round]	轟 hong	to bombard	[h] [+round]

In contrast to that of Mandarin, the sound inventory of Taiwanese does not include retroflex consonants and the consonant [f], a fact captured in the lack of retroflex sounds and [f] in Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. However, the origin of the contrast of roundedness and unroundedness is unclear. Both Mandarin

and Taiwanese have rounded and unrounded vowels, but the use of this feature in the online data I collected seems to be less consistent. Further study is necessary to investigate contact-induced language change and the general public's awareness of these changes in the Taiwanese context.

6.7 Group Solidarity and Socialization

Having described the four forms of creative play with writing systems, I now turn to analyze their functions and the factors that contribute to their popularization on the Internet. In contrast to the earlier discussion of technological determinants of playfulness online, in this section the focus is on interactional and social factors.

One such factor that seems to be especially important in the Taiwanese BBSs is group solidarity. Baym (1995) observes that humorous performances can be used to create group solidarity among Internet users. The comments of the student interviewees relate creative play with writing systems to an awareness of shared group practices. Consider, for example, the response of SJJ, a male freshman at NTU from a Southern Min family in Tainan, to my question about the functions of the stylized writing patterns.

(5)

(HY asks SJJ what kind of functions the stylized patterns of writing serve.)
SJJ: *hmm, yinggai shuo shi dajia zheyang ni jiu hui zheyang ba.*
Maybe it is because when others do it you'll do it too.

A different interviewee, WL, a graduate student at an American university, gives a more elaborated but similar answer when asked to comment on Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin (Su, 2004).

(6)

HY: *...Na ni zheyang xie huoshi ni kandao bieren zheyang xie ni juede, ta de gongneng shi shenme? Haishi keyi dadao shenme xiaoguo ma?*

...when you write like this or when you see someone write like this, what do you think the function is? Or what kind of effect can one get?

WL: Chuncui youqu haowan la.

It's simply for fun.

HY: Hmhmm.

WL: Dui a. Yinggai ye keyi shuo you yidian, jiusuan shi na zhong, e, jiaozuo, en, zhe ge jiao shenme, liuxing ba.

Yeah, maybe also a little, uh, I am not sure how to say it, maybe trendy?

HY: *Hmhmm.*

WL: Jiushi yinwei haoxiang, turan zhijian haoxiang wanglu shang zhe zhong yuyan henduo.

Because all of a sudden, there are so many such usages on the Internet.

HY: *Hmhmm.*

WL: Ranhou yeshi gen zhe dajia liuxing, ranhou, ziji ye, ye wei le hao wan ranhou ye gen zhe dajia zheyang yong zhe zhong yuyan zhe yang.

So I just follow the trend, and I myself follow everyone and use this kind of usage for fun.

As the above comments suggest, there is a socialization process that takes place on the BBSs (and the Internet in general), giving rise to trends and in-group usages. The college-affiliated BBS's in Taiwan can be analyzed as a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998), defined by Eckert (2000) as

> an aggregate of people who come together around some enterprise. United by this common enterprise, people come to develop and share ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values—in short, practices—as a function of their joint engagement in activity. (p. 35)

Whether the members of the BBS community have shared speech norms is unknown, but members participate in a common endeavor to create a unique BBS environment and jointly construct relations through the development of a common view toward the community and its participants. The pursuit of online communication brings BBS users together, and through the mutual engagement, they negotiate the meanings of their experiences on the BBS and develop routines and styles of communication as a result of their shared history of learning and exploring. A community of practice, thus, is not defined simply by the purpose of the joint engagement: it is simultaneously defined by its memberships and a repertoire of negotiable resources accumulated over time. BBS users develop a shared body of knowledge about what to do and what not to do. Language practices on the BBSs are highly stylized such that a new user needs to undergo socialization to learn to be a fully competent participant in the community.

On these BBSs the exploration and use of various forms of language play are highly encouraged. The humorous nature of these forms of creative use of language thus suits well the playful atmosphere of the Internet chat room. However, it is important to recognize that the playful effect of the practices discussed in this paper does not come solely from the form of language itself, but also from negotiated

meanings attached to these practices and from the group's recognition of them as funny, friendly overtures. The following example contains three excerpts in which interviewees comment specifically on these effects.

(7)

Excerpt (a): YQ is a female sophomore from a Southern Min family in Tainan.

HY: Mm, na ni juede xie de ren weishenme hui xiang zheyang xie, huozhe shi, ni juede you shenme xiaoguo ma?

Zheyang xie youmeiyou shenme xiaoguo?

Mm. Why do you think people would want to write like this, or do you think there is any kind of effect?

What kind of effect does this style of writing have?

YQ: Zhuang keai a.

(They are) trying to look cute/likable.

HY: Zhuang keai, kan qilai bijiao nianqing zheyangzi.

Trying to look cute/likable, so that they appear younger.

YQ: Dui a. Buran jiushi ta juede zheyang xie qilai, ganjue, bijiao qinqie ba.

Right. Or he/she might think this style of writing sounds friendlier.

Excerpt (b): FS is a male senior from Taipei

(When FS was asked the same question)

FS: Biru shuo zheyang bijiao qinqie a, huoshi bijiao haowan zheyangzi.

For example it is friendlier, or funnier.

Excerpt (c): SY is a male from Taipei recently graduated from NTU. HW is a male junior from Taipei.

(When SY and HW were asked the same question)

SY: Biru shuo ni you yi tian xinqing hen hao, ranhou gen renjia liaotian de shihou, keneng you shihou, you shihou jiu yong zhe zhong dongxi.

For example, suppose one day you are in a good mood. Then when you chat with

someone, you might use such things.

HY: Hmhmm.

SY: Dui a. Huo shi ni xiang yao qiaopi de jianghua.

Right. Or when you want to talk jocularly.

HY: Hmhmm.

SY: Biaoda ziji de xiangfa de shihou=

When you try to express yourself=

HW: = Piru gaibian ziji pingchang de fengge.

=For example, when you try to change your normal style.

SY: (something inaudible)

HY: *Gaibian yansu de, pingchang yansu de*

Change the serious, the normally serious (image)

HW: *Jiushi pingchang kan bu dao de na mian keyi zai wanglu shang chuxian.*

That is, the side of you that doesn't usually show can appear online.

SY: Pingchang bijiao muna de.

Those who usually appear introverted (can change their personalities online).

Most interviewees agree that the employment of such forms of language play conveys a sense of friendliness, cuteness, or congeniality. Such a consensus of what can be regarded as playful is also illustrated by a recent comment made by an interviewee, LR: *Taiwan guoyu liuxing guo le, bu haoxiao le* "(Stylized) Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is not in anymore. It's not funny anymore." In part, this perception originates from the socialization each interviewee undergoes as a member of Taiwanese society and, more specifically, as a member of a Taiwan-based BBS community.

6.8 The Multiple Functionality of the Stylized Representations on the Linguistic Level

Roman Jakobson, in his article "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics" (Jakobson, 1960), proposes a schemata which includes factors inalienably involved in verbal communications:

Context

Addresser Message Addressee

Contact

Code

Figure 3. Jakobson's schemata: factors involved in verbal communication

Each of these six factors determines a different function of language: addresser-emotive, addressee-conative, context-referential, message-poetic, contact-phatic, and code-metalingual.

Referential

Emotive Poetic Conative

Phatic

Metalingual

Figure 4. A corresponding scheme of functions

According to Jakobson's model, the use of the stylized representations fulfills at least three functions simultaneously: the referential function, which orients toward the context; the poetic function, which directs attention to the form of the message; and the metalingual function, which calls for knowledge of language and drawing attention to it. In the production and interpretation of the stylized representations, on the level of referential function, the intended sentential meaning is conveyed, and attention is also directed to the sociolinguistic situation (see the following sections) that gives rise to the mimicry of the accent or languages in question. On the level of poetic function, attention is directed to the discrepancy between the intended meaning of the sentence and the anomaly in meaning of the string of words containing the stylized representations. Furthermore, metalinguistic ability is required to be able to produce and to interpret instances of stylized representations. The complexity and multiple functions involved illustrate that the stylized representations are a form of language play that has aesthetic value. Part of the funny, jocular effect created by such a practice comes from its inherently functional multiplicity.

A linguistic analysis alone, however, does not fully account for the effect the stylized representations produce. If we take Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin as an example, one key aspect of the language play lies in the parodic juxtaposition of the representation of an accent that is often associated with a lack of education and one's intellectual ability to analyze the accent and to manipulate the writing

system. In order to investigate this aspect, it is necessary to examine the relationship between the stylized practices and the identities and images the members of the Internet community wish to project.

6.9 Attitudes, Ideologies and Linguistic Practice

As noted earlier, the three stylized representations create humor through the incongruity between the visual and the auditory at the linguistic level. Sociolinguistically, the humorous effects evoked by the representations can also be traced to the socio-cultural situation in Taiwan and the ideologies and stereotypes associated with the use of each linguistic variety. The three linguistic varieties involved—English, Taiwanese, and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin—enjoy different forms of prestige in various speech contexts: English is the most overtly prestigious, Taiwanese seems to be in the middle, and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is the most stigmatized. At the same time, this ranking only concerns overt prestige; the social meanings attached to each linguistic variety are usually multiple and sometimes contradictory. A highly respected linguistic variety may not be used in familiar contexts for its lack of warmth or humanity, while a stigmatized linguistic variety may remain popular because of the sense of solidarity and friendliness it conveys (Labov, 1972a; Trudgill, 1972). It is, however, important to note that the prestige and functional differences of the three linguistic varieties has to be analyzed in relation to those of Mandarin. Mandarin is often commented as a “neutral” variety

by my interviewees, while the three linguistic varieties in question are seen as carrying more salient social meanings.

On the Taiwanese BBSs, this explicit ranking of overt prestige of the three linguistic varieties in speech contexts interacts with multiple social meanings associated with the Chinese writing system and the dominant code of writing in Taiwan. The result is a "leveling" effect; that is, the interactional functions of Stylized English, Stylized Taiwanese, and Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin become less distinctively different from one another. All three patterns of writing involve incongruity between sound and meaning; all three are taken as a form of language play to show congeniality and humor and to create an online persona; all three create a sense of playfulness by deviating from written Mandarin, the norm of writing in Taiwan. Partly as a result of the above reasons, the explicit ranking and the functional differentiation among the three in speech contexts becomes much more obscure in online contexts. However, as I show later in the analysis, although functional differentiation among the three stylized representations becomes less clear than that among their spoken counterparts, the stylized representations still display subtle differences from one another.

Why the "leveling" effect? One may wish to argue that in online contexts, the social meanings each linguistic variety carries are no longer important, and that, since the production of all three forms of language play involves similar processes, the sources of humor are, at a certain level, the same. However, I propose that the

leveling effect is related to the interaction between the social meanings attached to each linguistic variety and the multiple connotations associated with the Chinese writing system. Indeed, as we have seen, all three forms of language play involve exploitation of the morphosyllabic nature of the Chinese writing system. Yet their similarity is only superficial: Stylized English, Stylized Taiwanese, and Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin are linked with different language ideologies and stereotypes prevalent in Taiwanese society.

A detailed analysis of each pattern of stylized writing is necessary to facilitate our understanding of this point. I first provide an analysis of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, followed by a discussion of Stylized English and Stylized Taiwanese. As mentioned earlier, in speech contexts, actual Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is more common among older generations and among members of younger generations who grew up in rural areas. Hence, in the spirit of Ochs' theory of indexicality (1992), the heaviness of a speaker's Taiwanese accent when speaking Mandarin directly indexes age and rural-urban contrast. Furthermore, since rurality and older age often indicate a lack of access to education or education received in less than adequate facilities, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is indirectly linked with undesirable qualities such as ignorance or backwardness. At the same time, like many regional varieties reported in other societies, the accent has local prestige and is associated with solidarity-related values, such as friendliness, congeniality, and a local (Taiwanese) persona.

In online contexts, Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin still carries the social connotations of the spoken variety. Yet the transformation from an accent to a playful pattern of language use in a written medium complicates the interpretation of this practice. Competing and conflicting voices co-exist in Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. On the one hand, the writer's voice is present each time it is used; the sentential meaning expresses the referential content the writer attempts to convey. On the other hand, Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin evokes the voice of a speaker with a Taiwanese accent, albeit in a transformed way. The familiar, congenial persona associated with a Taiwanese accent is integrated into the writing of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. On this level, the author aligns him-/herself with the indexical values associated with the accent and its local prestige. However, the transformation from a spoken accent to written word play, which implies the ability to manipulate written language, filters out the negative connotation of backwardness often linked with a Taiwanese accent. Users' access to computers and modern technology also clearly distinguishes them from speakers of the stigmatized linguistic variety. On this level, the writer positions him-/herself away from negative representations of speakers with such an accent. Hence, by using Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, Internet users simultaneously associate themselves with the positive connotations and neutralize themselves from the negative indexical meanings associated with a Taiwanese accent.

As with Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, each instance of Stylized English conveys multiple and conflicting voices as well. However, in the case of Stylized English, the Chinese writing system plays a quite different role, particularly in terms of its formation and associated social meanings. As previously mentioned, English, with its international prestige, has received great emphasis in Taiwanese education. In addition to the presence of an English curriculum in Taiwan's formal educational institutions, learning English has emerged as a national movement on its own. For instance, parents send their children to expensive bilingual kindergartens; many English radio or TV language programs are broadcast every day; and English classes are offered in many places for learners of different ages and competences. Moreover, English fluency is a highly valuable skill in Taiwan's competitive job market.

However, despite its high prestige, English remains a foreign language and is not welcome in all contexts in Taiwan. The sense of sophistication attached to English use by Taiwanese speakers has a negative side: It is also interpreted as a sign of arrogance and a lack of appreciation for local Taiwanese culture. In daily interactional contexts, the "overuse" of English vocabulary and phrases is often criticized as showing off. In online contexts, the reaction toward the use of English is less harsh, as English appears to be the default language in the world of computer technology. In addition, although very few Taiwanese Internet users are unable to read and input Chinese characters, some consider keyboarding in English more

convenient. Writing as a kind of mediation also differs from speaking: writing and speaking are embodied differently, which provides another reason why written English is generally more acceptable than spoken English in daily interactional contexts.

However, this acceptability is often conditional. Chinese is still the predominant language on BBSs and online discussion groups, and postings in English are frequently accompanied by a paragraph justifying its use. I once witnessed a written confrontation between two friends who are members of the same online discussion group regarding the use of English. One complained that the other's constant use of English was showing off; the other defended himself, claiming that writing in English was more convenient. This confrontation resulted in the disappearance of English from the board. Since most members of this discussion group have a graduate degree, this reaction most assuredly has less to do with lack of English competence than with the negative connotations of the use of English.

Stylized English is much more widely accepted than English itself. Like Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, in addition to conveying the writer's voice and the referential meaning of the sentence, it conveys social meanings associated with both English and the Chinese writing system. However, whereas the sophistication linked with English is evoked in Stylized English too, its negative connotations, such as arrogance and lack of local identification, are mitigated by the use of the Chinese writing system. Through the use of Chinese characters, Stylized

English becomes nativized: It no longer represents a foreign, invasive product but rather a combination of the imported and the local. Although this study does not focus upon language ideologies associated with the Chinese orthographic system, it seems that many educated Taiwanese feel pride in the traditional Chinese writing system, and several interviewees implicitly or explicitly expressed positive attitudes toward Chinese orthography. [13] To them, Chinese orthography distinguishes Taiwanese/Chinese speakers and writers from the rest of the world. These positive attitudes carry over into the use of Stylized English, making it seem playful and friendly rather than arrogant.

In short, the Chinese writing system plays different roles in Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and Stylized English. While the use of Chinese characters transforms a stigmatized variety into a form of language play, it also renders Stylized English local. Superficially similar forms of language play carry dramatically different social meanings. At the same time, the functional differentiation between Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and Stylized English in online interaction is not as sharp as that between English and Taiwanese-accented Mandarin in speech contexts.

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[13] The general attitude towards the logographic Chinese writing system can be observed clearly in debates surrounding the standardization of Taiwanese. The proposal to write Taiwanese with the Roman alphabet seems to be the most feasible, since there has been a tradition of such a writing system among Christian missionaries in Taiwan. Yet this proposal is not well accepted in Taiwanese society. Chiung (1999) surveyed language attitudes toward a Taiwanese text written in seven different orthographies and found that the Chinese character-only orthography received the highest rating.

The above analyses are supported by comments made by the interviewees. When asked about the functional differences between the three patterns of writing, several interviewees stated that the three are similar in terms of language play and the jocular and friendly effects they produce (cf. excerpts in (7)). This claim is in line with the view that functional differentiation between the three forms of language play is less salient than between their spoken counterparts. Still other interviewees pointed out subtle differences between Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and Stylized English. Consider the following example:

(8)

DJJ: Ziji jiang taiyu ranhou zheyang xie wo juede hai hao, keshi Taiwan guoyu wo jiu juede youdian song.

If you speak Taiwanese and then write this way, it's ok. But (Stylized) Taiwanese-accented Mandarin sounds a little outdated.

HY: *Youdian song dui bu dui?*

A little outdated, right?

DJJ: *Dui a.*

Right.

HY: Na xie yingwen de hua ne?

How about (Stylized) English?

DJJ: *Da yingwen de hua hui bijiao shengying.*

If you type English, it seems stiff.

HY: *Hmhmm.*

DJJ: Da guowen de hua hui bijiao you qinqie gan.

If you type Chinese, it sounds friendlier.

HY: *Da shenme?*

Type what?

DJJ: *Da guowen de hua hui [bijiao you qinqie gan.*

If you type Chinese, it sounds friendlier.

HY: *[oh, jiuxiang xiamian xie o-mai-ga ganjue bijiao haowan.*

I see, just like the example below, *o-mai-ga* ("oh, my god")seems funnier.[14]

DJJ: *Dui a. Da yingwen de hua you bijiao gaoji yidian de ganjue (laugh)*

Right. English sounds a bit more sophisticated.

HY: Hmhmm.

DJJ: Na da zheyang de hua hui bijiao keai yidian de ganjue.

Typing like this (referring to Stylized English) gives a cuter/more likable impression.

In this excerpt, DJJ offers his impressions of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and the localizing effect of Stylized English. He first describes Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin as carrying a sense of outdatedness, and then points out the functional differences between English and Stylized English, thus supporting the above analysis that the two superficially similar forms of writing contain different social meanings.

Among the three types of stylized language, Stylized Taiwanese contains the least language play. Three of the interviewees explicitly commented that it represents an expedient, while a number of others hint at this idea: Given that Taiwanese lacks a standardized writing system, Stylized Taiwanese is simply the most intuitive way to represent Taiwanese expressions. Indeed, some of the sociolinguistic characteristics of Stylized Taiwanese are different from those of

[14] See (2a), a case of Stylized English.

Stylized English and Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. While English is based on the Roman alphabet, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is a spoken accent not normally associated with an autonomous orthographic system. Neither English nor Taiwanese-accented Mandarin necessarily requires using the Chinese writing system. Taiwanese, however, is regarded as a language independent from Mandarin, at least by educated speakers in Taiwan, although it lacks a standardized orthography. In comparison, Stylized Taiwanese seems more natural or less playful, perhaps an inevitable consequence of the fact that it is fairly natural to use the Chinese writing system for it, after all. However, the belief that it feels natural for a language, but not an accent or a dialect, to have a system of written representation is itself an ideology about language and literacy. Linguistically, the element of language play inherent in Stylized Taiwanese is not fundamentally different from that of Stylized English or Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin: All involve incongruity between the intended and literal meanings of characters. Through the semiotic process of erasure (Irvine & Gal, 2000), the more deliberately playful instances of Stylized Taiwanese are often overlooked and the level of their playfulness often downplayed. What is shown there is that playfulness does not involve only linguistic incongruity. It is also an ideological construction that cannot be isolated from the general public's attitudes toward languages, dialects, and writing.

6. 10 The Differential Interactional Functions of Stylized Representations

In the above analysis, I have shown that although the stylized representations may appear superficially similar as forms of language play involving incongruity between sounds and meaning, their social meanings can be quite different and are intimately related to the language ideologies circulating in contemporary Taiwanese society. With the support of interview data, I have argued that although the functional differentiation between the stylized representations seems less clear than that of the linguistic varieties involved in speech contexts, some interviewees are indeed aware of the different images or persona each form may create.

Along these lines, in this section, I further examine the interactional functions of Stylized Taiwanese, Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, and Stylized English, drawing interactional data from the postings that I have collected. In generally, all stylized representations convey a sense of liveliness and jocularity often associated with the persona of BBS users. However, upon closer examination on the actual interactional moments, stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin (sometimes in conjunction with Stylized Taiwanese) and Stylized English display certain functional differentiations, which further supports the above analysis that the meaning-making processes of each form of stylized representations involve multiple levels of complexity.

6.10.1 Categorizing Stylized Taiwanese

Instances of Stylized Taiwanese in my interactional data can be divided into three categories:

1. Colloquial expressions that may have a rough equivalent in Mandarin. For example, 好野人 *ho ya lang* "rich people"; 拍寫 *phaiN se* "sorry."[15]
2. Idiomatic expressions that have no exact equivalent in Mandarin. For example, 霧煞煞 *bu sa sa* "hasty/confusing"; 撩落去 *liao lue khi* "literally, to jump into the water; to make a conscious decision to get involved in something."
3. Quotations: Direct, indirect, and imagined quotations of a Taiwanese speaker.

There is probably not a very clear, unproblematic boundary between type 1 and type 2. In both cases, the switch from the written Mandarin, the dominant written code, to Stylized Taiwanese may indicate a change in tone and invoke a sense of familiarity to local culture. However, it is important to note that there are indeed differences in perceived interactional functions and effects between type 1 and type 2. The instances of Stylized Taiwanese with close Mandarin equivalents may be considered as carrying a higher level of playfulness. Since there is, in fact, a conventional way to express similar meanings in written Mandarin, the deviation from the dominant code may create an impression that such instances of stylized Taiwanese are not used out of necessity but are intended as forms of language play.

6.10.2 Categorizing Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin

Instances of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, unlike those of Stylized Taiwanese, cannot be categorized based on whether they have rough semantic equivalents in Mandarin. However, they can generally be categorized into two groups based on how conventionalized a usage is. The highly conventionalized ones usually carry a general sense of jocularity, while the more creative ones may display a wider range of interactional functions.

1. Conventionalized STM: instances that have been highly conventionalized on the Internet to invoke a playful tone. For example, 個 *ge* "measure word"→ 郭 *guo* "a surname," 我 *wo* "I" → 偶 *ou* "idol," 去 *qu* "go"→ 企 *qi* "enterprise."
2. Creative STM: instances that are less conventionalized.

6.10.3 Categorizing Stylized English

In comparison to instances of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and Stylized Taiwanese, instances of Stylized English are relatively few in my data. Partly due to its lower frequency of occurrence both in my data and likely in BBSs in general, the categorization of Stylized English based on criteria similar to those used above in Stylized Taiwanese and Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin

[15] The Romanization used here is the Romanization of these phrases' Taiwanese pronunciations.

appears to be more difficult. While all three stylized practices generally create an informal, congenial effect, Stylized English seems to display a narrow range of interactional functions in comparison to the stylization of local linguistic varieties, as I show later in the discussion.

6.10.4 Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin in a Face-Threatening Situation

Upon the examination of instances of creative Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, one interesting pattern emerges. It seems that in addition to an invocation of a generally playful persona, Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin alone or in conjunction with Stylized Taiwanese, more often than other stylized representations alone, are employed in face-threatening situations (Brown & Levinson, 1987), such as rejection to a request, request of clarification, etc.

One of my favorite examples occurs on the BBS of a group of students that I observed. A BBS user with an ID unknown to most of the members started several rounds of verbal dueling with one of the members. The two involved in the verbal dueling seemed to know each other well, but the rest of the group could not recognize the identity of the owner of the unknown ID. Such an act is a violation of the etiquette of the board that one should introduce him-/herself in their first posting, since it is a space that belongs to a specific organization. After several rounds, one member finally popped the question to ask for clarification of the unknown poster's identity, yet softened the tone with a number of linguistic

strategies. Excerpt (9) below shows the request as produced by the member in Chinese characters as well as its romanization and literal and intended meanings.

(9)

(Stylized Taiwanese: underlined; **Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin: bold**)

阿伯我看得霧煞煞….笑連ㄟ~~**祝偶**介紹一下啦！！！

Pinyin	Ape/Abo[16]	wo	kande	wusasa……
Gloss (literal)	uncle	I	see	fog-devil-devil
Gloss (intended)	uncle	I	see	confused

Pinyin	xiaolianei~~	**zhuou**	jieshao	yixia	la!!!
Gloss (literal)	laugh-connect-ei[17]	**bless-even**	introduce	a bit	particle
Gloss (intended)	youngster	**self**	introduce	a bit	particle

"As your uncle, I got very confused….young man~~ introduce **yourself**!!!"

In this case, Stylized Taiwanese and Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, as well as the impersonation of an elderly uncle, invoke a cultural stereotype of a less educated rural resident whose linguistic repertory does not include standard Mandarin. Although the request is short, it is loaded with multiple levels of meanings. The use of the term *ape/abo* alone invokes a variety of meanings. *Ape/abo* is a kinship term that is originally used to address father's elder brothers

[16] The term 阿伯 "elder uncle" can be pronounced either as *ape* (Taiwanese) or *abo* (Mandarin).

[17] The symbol ㄟ (spelled as 'ei' in Pinyin) is a phonetic symbol from the Zhuyin system.

but is often extended to refer to elderly men in general. On the one hand, the connotation of symbolic family implicit in the use of *ape/abo* shortens the distance between two interlocuters who have had no connection and prior interaction with each other. On the other hand, *ape/abo* is an elderly and, hence, authoritative figure. The impersonation of an elderly uncle, to a certain degree, entitles the poster the right to ask the question and position the owner of the unknown ID as a youngster expected to show respect to an elderly person and, perhaps, to the etiquette of the BBS as well.

The combination of the use of *ape/abo* and the stylized practices provides another layer of complexity. As I mentioned earlier, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is often associated with positive qualities such as friendliness and congeniality and conversely with negative characteristics such as backwardness and uneducatedness. The stylized practices in (9), especially the instance of stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, invoke the image of a less educated elderly man from a rural area. While an *ape/abo* is an authoritative figure, an *ape/abo* with lower education from a rural area can be friendly, on the one hand, and ignorant, on the other hand. The friendliness shortens the interpersonal distance, while the ignorance saves face for the poster with an unknown ID: in some sense, it is because of the *ape/abo*'s ignorance that such a question is produced and imposed on the youngster. The use of the stylized practices, therefore, softens the tone in this face-threatening act and makes the request for clarification of the unknown poster's identity seem less

offensive. Soon after this request was posted, the unknown poster responded and finally introduced himself on the board.

The example illustrates the poster's creative employment of the social, cultural, and linguistic resources circulating in the Taiwanese society and in the realm of BBS in dealing with a potentially face-threatening situation. There are quite a few other cases involving Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin in similar situations. Although in this particular case, a number of linguistic strategies collectively achieve the communicative goal(s), it appears that Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin plays a central role in mitigating this potentially face-threatening situation. Although Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and Stylized Taiwanese are both used in this case, it appears that Stylized Taiwanese alone would not be able to achieve such an effect while the use of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin alone would be more likely to successfully trigger the cultural stereotype necessary to interpret this request.

I argue that it is exactly the multiple voicing in Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin discussed in the previous sections that makes instances of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin a useful tool in dealing with face-threatening situations. In addition to a congenial persona that Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin shares with other stylized practices, instances of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin further carry a stronger sense of naïveté and ignorance than the other two stylized practices, which becomes handy in mitigating a refusal or a

request for clarification as shown in the above example. On the other hand, the playfulness and the manipulation of the linguistic systems involved in the stylized practices help the author of these practices dissociate themselves from the stigmatized accent and avoid the risk of being recognized as "genuinely" uneducated and simple-minded.

6. 11 Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin: A challenge to the existing hierarchy of language?

It is through its multiple functionality at the linguistic level and the multiple invocation of social categories and ideologies at the sociolinguistic level that Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is able to produce its humorous and playful effect. Popularized on the Internet, Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin has now spread to other domains, such as in print media. With the increasing visibility of the practice in public domains and the positive, jocular image associated with the practice, the next question worth exploring is whether this practice challenges the hierarchy of languages in Taiwan in any way.

I believe the answer is no. A symbolic transgression does not necessarily indicate identifying with a particular group. In her study of use of African American Vernacular English by middle-class European American boys, Bucholtz (1999) argues that language crossing to AAVE and other discursive strategies in narratives actually preserve the existing racial hierarchy. In her study of Mock Spanish used by

Anglo Americans, Hill (1999) suggests that Mock Spanish indirectly indexes covert racism and that only the powerful group (Whites) can afford to transgress boundaries without losing identity. I believe that Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin presents a similar example. In the practice of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, the BBS users gain profits from symbolically negating the hierarchy of the languages without disrupting it in any real or serious way (Bourdieu, 1991). As mentioned earlier, although the accent is adopted in public, the very act of transforming the accent to a written medium reinforces the separation between the accent and its speakers, on the one hand, and language play and Internet users, on the other. The latters' ability to play with words and their access to modern technology ensure the recognition that the practice is simply a symbolic transgression, not an actual one.

Such an analysis also gains its support from the interview data. A female interviewee made the following comment on Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin and its users:

(10)

(ZY is her boyfriend, who is known for his enthusiasm to use Taiwanese among peers and has a noticeable Taiwanese accent when speaking Mandarin.)

XP: *keai de nusheng xie Taiwan guoyu jiu hen keai. ZY xie de hua jiu "Oh, my god."*

It sounds cute when a cute girl writes Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. But if ZY writes it, *oh my god*.

Since ZY's Mandarin displays some of the phonological features stereotypically linked to Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, an instance of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin produced by ZY would suffer the risk of being identified as a "real" instance of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. In contrast, the characteristics often associated with a cute girl in Taiwan are ideologically constructed at many levels as the opposite of those of a Taiwanese-accented Mandarin speaker (cf. discussion in Chapter 5). The ideological opposition thus makes it seem apparent that an instance of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin by "a cute girl" is a form of language play and a symbolic transgression. In the spirit of Hill (1993), the use of Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin can be perceived as an active distancing from Taiwanese-accented Mandarin speakers.

Another effect of the transformation from a spoken accent to a written form of language play lies in the dichotomy between the standard and the stigmatized implied in the written form. In speech, Mandarin speakers in Taiwan display a range of variation with regard to the degree of influence from Taiwanese phonology in their speech. The various accents form a continuum in which one end is standard Taiwanese Mandarin while the other end is the most stigmatized variety of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin. In Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, however,

a dichotomy is created between the standard Chinese writing and the mockery of the stereotypical accent. The dichotomy-making is a process of erasure (Irvine, 2001), in which an ideology simplifies the sociolinguistic field, ignoring some phenomena while rendering others distinctive. The transformation from spoken to written context disregards internal variations in the continuum and reproduces the ideology that the standard variety is further away from the stigmatized accent in the hierarchy of languages in Taiwan than it often is.

6. 12 Stylized Practices: Are They Gendered?

In the interviewees' comments on the communicative functions and interactional effects of stylized practices, the adjective *keai* "cute/likable" occurs frequently, as can be observed in excerpts (7a), (8), and (10). It is often used in conjunction with verbs such as *zhuang* "to act; to pretend (to be cute/lovable)" and *shua* "to play; to act (cute/lovable)." While the meanings of *keai* range from the more gender-loaded "cute" to the more gender-neutral "lovable/likable," *zhuang keai* or *shua keai* "to act cute/lovable," in contrast, appears to convey a sense of childlikeness conventionally associated with women to a greater degree than with men. Two related questions, therefore, are whether these practices, often commented as *zhuang keai*, are seen as gendered and whether women actually use stylized practices more frequently.

A complete answer to these questions is beyond the scope of this study. However, I would like to offer a few observations that may help shed light on the relationship between gender and stylized practices. The interviewees' perceptions of the connections between gender and stylized practices appear to be ambivalent: on the one hand, as mentioned above, stylized practices were often commented as an act of *zhuang keai*, which can be associated with childlikeness or femininity. Some interviewees also reported that female Internet/BBS users tend to use stylized practices more frequently. On the other hand, some interviewees' also made the observations that both male and female posters engage in stylized practices and that there is not a salient difference in frequency of use across genders. In practice, the terms *zhuang keai* and *shua keai* are also used to refer to the behaviors of both male and female Internet users and occasionally occur in the self-descriptions concerning online linguistic behaviors given by interviewees of both genders.

I argue that the ambivalence toward the relationship between gender and stylized practices can be understood from two perspectives. First, stylized practices (as a whole) carry multiple social connotations, among which gender-related meaning(s) is but one. In response to the interview question "what are the motivations, functions, and perceived effects of the stylized practices?", the interviewees produced a range of answers, among which *zhuang keai* "to act cute/lovable" (9 out of 44), *qinqie* "friendly, congenial" (9 out of 44), and *haoxiao, gaoxiao* "funny; to produce a playful, comical effect" (14 out of 44) occurred the

most frequently. Although *zhuang keai* may be linked to characteristics conventionally associated with females, other equally salient functions/effects of stylized practices, such as friendliness and humor, appear to be more neutral with respect to gender stereotypes. In addition, the connotation of "not serious" or "not taken seriously" implicit in *keai* and *zhuang keai*, to a certain degree, seem compatible with the generally playful atmosphere fostered and encouraged in recreational BBSs.

Another point I wish to make is that, as I have discussed in previous sections, although stylized practices involve similar exploitations of the Chinese writing system, they are not homogenous sociolinguistic practices. Each instance of stylized practices is loaded with a variety of social meanings, and its effects and interpretations can only be understood as situated within its immediate interactional and lager societal contexts. Therefore, superficially similar forms can be interpreted drastically differently when they are produced and interpreted by people with different social positions and when the stylized practices appear in different interactional moments. The argument I wish to make is not to claim that stylized representations are gender-neutral practices—in contrast, I believe that ideologies of gender play a salient role in the production and interpretation of stylized practices. Yet gender is but one social dimension that interacts with the multiple-layered-ness of stylized practices.

6. 13 Attitudes toward *Zhuyin Wen*

Although *Zhuyin Wen* is the most popular of the four types of creative use of writing systems in terms of frequency of use, it also draws the most explicit criticisms from interviewees. Blunt, negative comments such as *Zhuyin Wen hen taoyan* "*Zhuyin Wen* is annoying," *zhuyin wen shi meiyou shou guo jiaoyu de biaoxian* "*Zhuyin Wen* is a sign of a lack of education on the part of the writer," and *xiedu wenzi* "it degrades our written language" were made during the interviews. (There may well be some inconsistency between actual practice and professed attitudes of students interviewed.) From a purely linguistic point of view, the production and interpretation of all four strategies requires metalinguistic skill on the part of users. The level of linguistic competence involved in producing and interpreting *Zhuyin Wen* does not seem to be particularly lower or higher than that required to produce the three other forms of language play. If this is the case, why are attitudes toward *Zhuyin Wen* so negative?

I propose that the different attitudes are related to the social meanings attached to Chinese orthography and the *Zhuyin* system. Well-educated Taiwanese take pride in the morphosyllabic Chinese writing system; interviewees' negative reactions toward *Zhuyin Wen* seem to be another illustration of this attitude. The role of the *Zhuyin* system as a subsidiary and transitional stage in the acquisition of Chinese characters links *Zhuyin* indirectly with a lack of education or formality and with childlikeness. Furthermore, the alphabetic nature of *Zhuyin* also differs from

the widely cherished morphosyllabic Chinese writing, which partially defines the uniqueness of the Chinese languages.

It is thus understandable that *Zhuyin Wen* evokes such criticism among my interviewees, who are students at one of the most prestigious universities in Taiwan. The elite in any society is usually composed of those individuals who invest the most social capital in the orthography of their language (Bourdieu, 1991). These attitudes toward *Zhuyin Wen* are reinforced as more and more college BBSs proscribe the use of *Zhuyin Wen*, an interesting trend in its own right. During my interviews, criticism of *Zhuyin* was also linked to the diminishing future of the Chinese language. For many interviewees, *Zhuyin Wen* was not simply regarded as a creative use of a writing system, but as a sign that users' knowledge of traditional Chinese characters was declining. Consequently, *Zhuyin Wen* and the other three stylized patterns of writing are assigned different social meanings. While Stylized English, Stylized Taiwanese, and Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin exploit the characteristics of Chinese characters, and thus are compatible with the indexical values associated with the Chinese writing system, *Zhuyin Wen* is taken as representing a lack of either the ability or the willingness to master the use of Chinese characters. Whatever the reason, its use offends my interviewees' positive attitudes toward Chinese orthography.

6. 14 Language Play at the Local and the Supra-Local Levels

At the more local level, we may say that the innovative forms of writing on the BBSs serve to distinguish college BBS users or, perhaps more generally, Internet users from the larger Taiwanese population. In a more global context, however, the stylized representations and *Zhuyin Wen* are forms of language use that can only be understood within the context of comtemporary Taiwanese society. Taiwanese-accented Mandarin is a unique linguistic variety spoken only in Taiwan, and language play based on the accent is a linguistic product that belongs solely to a society in which members are familiar with both the Chinese writing system and the accent. Likewise, *Zhuyin* is a transliteration system used primarily in Taiwan and the transnational Chinese communities that have ties with Taiwan. These particular linguistic styles, originated in Taiwan, thus have their importance in the ideologizing of social differentiations: they distinguish Taiwanese society from the remainder of the Chinese-speaking/writing world. As Irvine (2001) suggests, styles can be recognized as a part of a social semiosis of distinctiveness. With an ambivalent relationship between China and Taiwan and the emergence of a Taiwanese identity, the use of stylized practices can be considered a way in which BBS users understand the social meanings attached to salient social groups and negotiate their positions within a system of distinctions. The existence of various ideologies at both a global and a local levels, therefore, makes it possible for authors of stylized practices to display multiple positionalities with regard to self and other.

The dynamic nature of linguistic practice is clearly manifested in each instance of stylized practices, which presents an on-going interaction between dominant and local ideologies.

6. 15 Summary

In this chapter, I have explored four creative uses of writing on the Taiwan-based Internet. This analysis has demonstrated how Taiwanese college students use the linguistic resources at their disposal to create innovative linguistic styles in response to a new medium. At the same time, this study illustrated how linguistic practices in different media are situated within the larger social context.

A number of technological, linguistic, and social factors collectively contribute to the emergence of these linguistic practices. The written basis and the interactivity of the Internet encourage written forms of language play (cf. Danet, 2001; Herring, 1999; Werry, 1996). Linguistically, the morphosyllabic nature of the Chinese writing system makes it possible to direct one's attention to the incompatibility between the sound structure and the meaning of a word/phrase in these creative uses of writing systems. From a social point of view, Stylized Taiwanese, Stylized Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, and Stylized English all convey multiple and sometimes conflicting social meanings associated with their spoken counterparts. The processes of transforming spoken English, Taiwanese, and

Taiwanese-accented Mandarin into forms of online language play involve mitigation of some of the indexical values associated with spoken varieties on the one hand, and the addition of some of the social meanings linked to the Chinese writing system, on the other. Similarly, *Zhuyin Wen* conveys negative stereotypes associated with the use of this alphabetic system. In addition to the social meanings they inherit from their spoken linguistic varieties and associated orthographic systems, various connotations accrue to all four forms as they become more and more widely used on the Internet, and as BBS users interactively negotiate the meaning of their experiences and online practices. This study illustrates how innovative linguistic styles are part and parcel of socio-economic processes and how they are used by the BBS users/college students to establish a space of their own on the Taiwan-based Internet and in the broader China-Taiwan and international contexts.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

In the most succinct term, this dissertation presents a study of the mutually constitutive relationships between linguistic and discursive practices, identity construction, and language ideologies in the context of contemporary Taiwan. Analyzing phonological variation, code-switching, prominent sociolinguistic stereotypes, and language attitudes revealed by the participants in a variety of contexts, this study explores how college students from different regions of Taiwan make use of linguistic and cultural resources available to construct multiple identities with respect to social categories such as region, gender, BBS/Internet users, college students, members of particular student groups, and contemporary Taiwanese. This dissertation also examines how various indexical meanings associated with common linguistic varieties in Taiwan are formed, how language ideologies participate in the construction of identity and the formation of social groups, and how language ideologies (as well as ideologies of region, gender, and class) are constantly reinforced and reconfigured through linguistic and social practices in daily interactional and performative contexts.

7.1 Revisiting the Research Questions

In Chapter 1, I proposed three sets of research questions to be answered in this study. Here, I repeat them and give a summary of my findings in response to these questions.

Question Set 1:

(a) How do Taiwanese college students of different backgrounds with respect to region of college attended, region of origin, and urbanness of origin, use the available linguistic resources in speaking and online to create complex identities?

The whole of Chapter 4 deals with the relationship between language and region. It shows that there is a salient ideological linkage between linguistic varieties such as Mandarin, Taiwanese, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, and English and the cultural concepts of the North and the South in Taiwan. Sections 4.3 and 4.4 specifically address the construction of regional identity among college students that I worked with. Section 4.3 first gives an overview of salient regional differences reported by all 44 interviewees and further examines the linguistic features employed by and language attitudes revealed by two interviewees of different regional background in their respective interviews. It shows that through linguistic and discursive practices, the North and the South are constructed as cultural places distinctive from each other. Through the processes of rendering particular places socially meaningful,

individual and group identities are simultaneously constructed. Section 4.4 examines how group solidarity and regional awareness are invoked and highlighted with various semiotic resources (e.g., language, music, traditional performance genre) in performative contexts.

The focus of Chapter 5 is largely language ideologies and gender stereotypes. Although the cultural concept of *taike* is analyzed mainly as the intersection of ideologies of language, gender, and class, a discussion of this social stereotype inevitably leads us to issues related to identity, such as the formation of social groups in relation to the significant Others. I have shown that implicit in the *taike* discourses are two other social groups, one of which is the "we" group, the circulators of the *taike* jokes who consider themselves linguistically and socially different from members of the *taike* group.

Chapter 6 discusses language use on the Taiwan-based Internet and demonstrates that the common linguistic practices on the BBS can be viewed as a resource for the users to construct a joint online persona. The multiple levels of meanings associated with the stylized practices enable the BBS/Internet users to show their multiple positionalities and identities both in the local and supra-local levels. Although the data analysis is divided into three chapters, each focusing on one level of participants' multiple identities, it is important to note that the participants are all college students and Taiwanese. The importance of the two aspects of identity is not always explicitly pointed out in the analysis, but the

students' regional identity, gender identity, and identity as Internet users should always be understood in relation to their identity as college students and Taiwanese.

Question Set 1:

(b) To what extent are dialect styling and language switching conventionalized (Ferguson, 1994) among the students?

Chapter 4 and Chapter 6 both discuss dialect stylization and code-switching. The degree of conventionalization of these practices varies across context and medium. Section 4.2 discusses one media report's occasional switch to common (and conventionalized) Taiwanese phrases in an otherwise standard written Mandarin article and the ideological implications of such practices. Section 4.3 compares and contrasts code-switching and phonological variation in two interviews. It shows that instances and degrees of code-switching and phonological variation are often related to the interviewees' discursive constructions of Taipei and Tainan as two cultural places and to their identities as Taipei-ans and Tainanites. Section 4.4 examines dialect stylization in performative contexts. Stylized practices like these differ from code-switching and phonological variation in the interviews in that while it is perhaps safe to say that the highlighted stylized linguistic features in stage performances operate above the level of speaker's consciousness and are more or less conventionalized, such is not necessarily the case in the interviews.

Chapter 6 investigates dialect and language stylization in another medium: the Internet. Phonological features commonly associated with Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, Taiwanese, and English are transformed into forms of language play. In this chapter, I showed that certain phonological features have become conventionally associated with such forms of language play. I also argued that the social meanings of these online stylized practices are closely related to the indexical values of their spoken counterparts, on the one hand, and to the connotations associated with the Chinese writing system and written Mandarin as the dominant written code in Taiwanese society, on the other hand.

Question 2:

How do students understand the social meanings of Mandarin, Taiwanese, dialect styling, and code-switching in speaking and online contexts?

This is a research question addressed throughout the entire dissertation. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 all address students' language attitudes as revealed in various contexts and seek to investigate systematically the processes through which linguistic varieties are accorded different values and language ideologies are formed and shaped. While all three chapters attempt to explore the social meanings of Mandarin, Taiwanese, Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, dialect styling, and code-switching, each focuses on

the interaction of language ideologies with one salient social group or cultural concept: region, gender, and Internet users.

Question 3:

How can we best contextualize the responses to questions 1 and 2 in light of the changing reality of Taiwanese society?

The response to this question is also implicit or explicit in all sections of data analysis. On the one hand, this dissertation recognizes the role history plays in the formation and shaping of dominant language ideologies in contemporary Taiwan. On the other hand, it also emphasizes the on-going meaning-making processes in every moment of interaction, which are simultaneously influenced by the past and the present of Taiwanese society. While this study touches upon issues related to language and long-existing cultural concepts such as the contrast between the North and the South (Chapter 4) and *qizhi* (Chapter 6), it seeks to situate them in the context of contemporary Taiwan. The dissertation also discusses the relationships between language and newly emergent cultural stereotypes or practices such as *taike* (Chapter 5) and online stylized practices (Chapter 6) and argues that they need to be understood in relation to existing linguistic practices and social groups.

7.2 Significance of this Study

This study is the first detailed empirical investigation of switching between accents or languages accorded different kinds of prestige in Taiwan based on data from both the Internet and face-to-face communication. Its findings are significant in several ways.

7.2.1 Significance for the Field of Sociolinguistics

This study represents a contribution to our understanding of how contextualized analysis of linguistic practices, which range from linguistic units as small as phonological features and places code-switching occurs to discursive practices as large as popular discourses on regional contrast, can bring us insights into larger theoretical issues of importance in sociolinguistics and anthropology. Its significance, therefore, is twofold. On the one hand, it reminds the field of (socio)linguistics that even small linguistic units, such as retroflex consonants in Taiwan Mandarin, can be heavily loaded with multiple social meanings. A complete understanding of language has to take its social implications into consideration. On the other hand, it shows that linguistic analysis can provide a new perspective and contribute to larger issues of importance in social theory.

Drawing from a variety of data, this study discusses several important and interrelated concepts within the fields of sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology: practice, identity, ideology, indexicality, and performance. While the

five concepts are often related to different bodies of literature, they are nevertheless interconnected. As noted, Bucholtz and Hall (2004a) summarize how these processes operate in the creation of identity:

> Ideology is the level at which practice enters the field of representation. Indexicality mediates between ideology and practice, producing the former through the latter. Performance is the highlighting of ideology through the foregrounding of practice. (p. 381)

One major significance of this study is its attempt to examine closely and relate the five separate yet interrelated theoretical processes and to enrich our understanding of these constructs in light of empirical data from Taiwan. In addition, while this study primarily takes language as the starting point of analysis, it is not confined within language-related issues conventionally associated with sociolinguistics. For example, Chapter 4 relates a sociolinguistic analysis to the anthropology of space and place, while Chapter 5 explores the relationship between ideologies of language, gender, and class. Chapter 6 connects a sociolinguistic approach with computer-mediated communication, an emerging field with a vast literature in its own right.

The diversity of data used in this study also brings us insight into the theoretical issues discussed above. Of special interest in this study is the incorporation of the analysis of both Internet and conversational data in the study of language ideologies, identity, indexicality, and performance. Although many

researchers have approached the issues related to language ideologies and identities with a wide range of data, few have investigated how interaction on the Internet reflects and reproduces language ideologies and participates in the construction of identities. By focusing on the language use of college students, who spend a significant amount of time online and are developing conscious awareness of their identities, the project demonstrates how Taiwanese college students make use of the linguistic resources at their disposal to create language style in response to change in mode of communication, how different types of communication interact with each other as language users construct identities and language attitudes, and how linguistic practices in different mediums are situated within the larger sociopolitical context.

Given its unique and ambivalent political status in international society, Taiwan as the site of fieldwork also proves to contribute to our understanding of language, identity, and ideologies. Taiwan is a society that has undergone tremendous social and linguistic change during the past several decades. Each generation of Taiwanese has struggled with the question of what it means to be a Taiwanese in the contemporary context. This research, thus, offers the opportunity to analyze some of the sociolinguistic correlates of rapid modernization and language attitudes and to view issues of structure, agency, and change—persistent concerns in the social sciences—from the perspective of the Taiwanese linguistic situation and models in linguistic and social theory. Furthermore, although the site

of fieldwork is Taiwan, the scope of this project is not limited within Taiwanese society. The constantly changing relationship between Taiwan and China is an issue every Taiwanese faces in their everyday life. To a certain degree, this research project seeks to relate the sociolinguistic phenomena in Taiwan to the broader Chinese and world communities. The attempt to analyze local linguistic practices in relation to the globalized world is significant to the field of sociolinguistics because the field has not addressed the relationship between linguistic practices and globalization in much depth.

7.2.2 Significance for the Field of Taiwanese Studies

This project is significant for the fields of Taiwanese studies for several reasons. First, this project represents an attempt to observe and analyze the role language plays in the process of identity formation under a rapidly changing political climate and social context. Although there was research in the 1990's on issues of language, identity, and conflict confronting Taiwan over the past several decades (e.g., Hsiau, 1997; e.g., Huang, 1993; Huang, 2000), new issues emerge in the post-Nationalist government era, when the governing party has changed for the first time in Taiwanese history and the relationship with China continues to become more tangled and complicated. The emergence of the Internet and increasing trade between Taiwan and China have greatly increased the contact between Taiwanese and Chinese. On the one hand, there is a stronger tendency among Taiwanese to

view themselves as members of an independent and separate political entity from China; on the other hand, there is greater interaction and cooperation in the economic and cultural arenas. A current analysis of language, identity and ideologies help shed light on how the different forces are at work in constructing a contemporary Taiwanese identity. Second, the literature on issues of language and identity in Taiwan has focused either on macro social processes of language use in Taiwan (e.g., Huang, 1993; e.g., Huang, 2000; Tse, 2000) or on the interactional aspects of language choice (e.g., Shih, 1997). This project represents the first detailed study to connect the micro analysis of linguistic features and language use to the macro sociopolitical context in Taiwan and to investigate how social meanings of common linguistic varieties are constantly negotiated and how everyday use of language in speaking and online shapes and reinforces dominant and local language ideologies. In addition, the type of identity investigated in existing literature is often limited to ethnic identity or national identity, while this dissertation explores identities at multiple levels. Third, this dissertation discusses prominent discourses such as regional contrast, *taike*, and *qizhi* from an analytical perspective. While these discourses themselves are already little studied, the sociolinguistic approach taken in this dissertation represents an innovation in the field of Taiwanese studies. Fourth, the fieldwork involves two sites of study, Taipei City and Tainan City. One major goal is to reduce the Taipei-centered perspective present in many scholarly works in the field of social sciences in Taiwan. I do not

intend to claim that the analysis done in this dissertation is neutral—as Walters (1996) reminds us, linguists, like everybody else, are not free from ideologies. However, by incorporating data collected from both sites, the study attempts to present and analyze the linguistic and social diversity of contemporary Taiwan and wishes to contribute to a more complete understanding of the complex and interwoven relationships between language, culture, and society.

7.3 Directions for Future Research

This study has uncovered some of the processes through which common linguistic varieties or linguistic features come to index a range of social meanings and some of the ways in which participants' multiple identities are constructed in relation to dominant language ideologies in Taiwan. With the same data and a similar goal to investigate the relationship between linguistic practices, identity, and language ideologies, there are at least two analytical directions that I would like to suggest.

First, a larger-scale statistical analysis of prominent phonological variables across different student groups, gender, and contexts (e.g., performances, naturally-occurring conversations, and interviews) could be conducted. While results of quantitative analysis may not directly show us the processes through which social meanings of linguistic practices are formed and contested, it enables us to see a general tendency across groups and contexts. Such information may provide us

insight into how language is used differently in a range of contexts and serve to situate qualitative analyses based on the same data. Related to this analytical direction concerns the data adopted in this dissertation. This dissertation has focused mostly on the analysis of performances and interviews. Naturally-occurring data were collected during the fieldwork but are not employed as systematically in the analysis. A more balanced incorporation of all three types of data, performances, naturally-occurring conversations, and interviews would show us the relationships between participants' stated understanding of these practices and their linguistic behaviors and further provide possible loci to investigate issues related to identity and language ideologies.

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